Napocor chief: I was not fired, I'm on leave

STORY ON PAGE A2

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
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Veep swamped with mixed advice

BY GERALD LACUARTA, JULIET JAVELLANA AND AGNES DONATO

REMAIN steadfast in opposing US intervention. Be a team player. Quit the Cabinet.

The unsolicited advice to Vice President Teofisto Guingona comes from different groups as the debate over the presence of American Special Forces in Mindanao heats up.

VEEP/ A19

It's final: High court shuts door on Jalosjos

BY NORMAN BORDADORA AND JULIET JAVELLANA

THE SUPREME Court yesterday ruled with finality on Rep. Romeo Jalosjos' motion for reconsideration of his conviction for statutory rape and acts of lasciviousness, junking it for "resounding absurdity."

The decision paves the way for the expulsion of the Zamboanga del Norte congressman, who

IT'S/ A18

Make-or-break meeting

Guingona ready to face consequences

BY CHRISTINE HERRERA AND DONA PAZZIBUGAN

A SHOWDOWN looms at the National Security Council meeting today between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr.

Guingona told the INQUIRER yesterday he was no longer "agonizing" and was prepared to go against the President's position on the deployment in the country of a sizeable number of American troops, and face the consequences.

The gap between the two highest officials of the land showed in yesterday's Cabinet meeting.

For the first time Guingona did not sit beside President Macapagal but opposite her from across the table.

Protocol dictates for Guingona to sit on the President's right during Cabinet meetings. Being the concurrent foreign secretary, he is the highest-ranking Cabinet official.

Guingona also kept his silence during the entire meeting. He left before the meeting adjourned.

Earlier, Ms Macapagal and Guingona had a breakfast meeting where apparently they had not reconciled their differences.

The President yesterday again refused to comment on Guingona's position which is contrary to her own. She has been a staunch supporter of the US-led campaign against the al-Qaida network of alleged terror mastermind, Osama bin Laden, and defended the deployment of American soldiers in the country as part of the worldwide anti-terror campaign.

"We (have) talked to each other so we don't

MAKE-OR-BREAK/ A19

DOJ: No deal yet, it's still under review

BY NORMAN BORDADORA AND MARTIN P. MARFIL

AN AGREEMENT seeking to give US military vessels and aircraft resupply facilities on Philippine territory has not been signed, officials yesterday said.

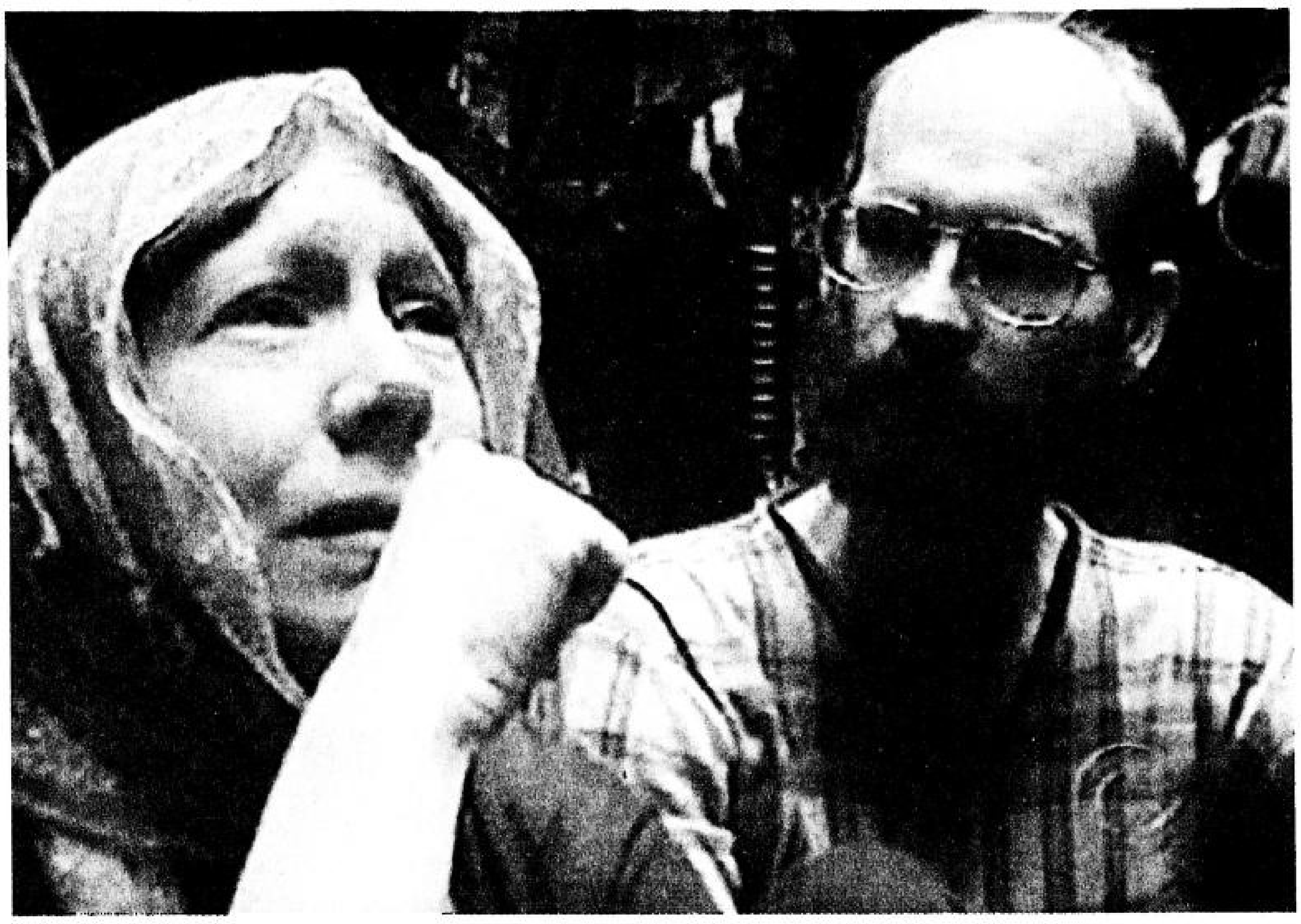
"I just went through the draft (of the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement on Monday morning). It is still being reviewed. So when I saw the INQUIRER story that it has already been signed, I immediately called (Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes)," Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said.

"He told me that it has yet to be signed," Perez said.

The justice secretary was reacting to a report that the Philippines and the United States had forged a 10-year "arrangement" to provide mutual military support, supplies and services.

A senior official earlier told the INQUIRER that the MLSA was negotiated and signed by the defense department, bypassing the Department

DOJ/ A19



THE ORDEAL of seven months in captivity seared into their faces, Martin and Gracia Burnham tell "48 Hours," on CBS-TV New York, during its interview that they are weary and hungry.

PHOTO GRAB BY RUFINO L. GONZALES II/INQUIRER NEWS SERVICE

PHOTO GRAB BY RUFINO L. GONZALES II/INQUIRER NEWS SERVICE

BEFORE the abduction, the happy Burnhams (above) committed to their missionary work. At left, closely guarded by heavily armed, masked men, the weary couple seem to have shrunk and aged.

ABU LEADER ILL

Sabaya kin holding Burnhams–AFP

BY JULIE S. ALIPALA
PDI Mindanao Bureau
AND CARLITO PABLO

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Abu Sayyaf captives Martin and Gracia Burnham have been turned over to the relatives of the bandit group's ailing spokesperson in Maluso, Basilan, the military said yesterday.

Quoting the Armed Forces' intelligence community, Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu said he had received a report to this effect. He said the military had also learned that Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya had become "very thin because of his illness."

But a military intelligence officer told the INQUIRER that Sabaya's supposed illness was only one of the reasons the Burnhams were entrusted to Sabaya's relatives.

The officer said the Abu Sayyaf was actually running out of provisions to sustain its hostages, and "in Maluso, they are fed well and are taken care of properly."

Cimatu said the military was now searching Maluso for the hostages.

"Because these (moves) are purely operational in nature, I am not in a position to talk about (the matter)," he added.

Aside from the Burnhams, a missionary couple from Kansas, the Abu Sayyaf is holding hostage Filipino nurse Deborah Yap. The bandits had earlier demanded P100,000 for Yap's freedom, but her family said it could not raise that amount.

SABAYA/ A18

Computer giant chips in ₱5-B investment

BY CARLITO PABLO

"THE PHILIPPINES is back on the radar screen."

With these words, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced that a big US computer chipmaker was investing an additional P4-5 billion in the country.

Intel Corp., the world's top semiconductor maker, said in Hong Kong that it would invest US$80-100 million this year to upgrade the technology of its test and assembly facility at the Gateway Industrial Park in General Trias, Cavite.

The upgrading of its facility in Cavite is aimed at supporting Intel's current generation Pentium 4 line and other microprocessors, the company said.

Intel also said it would shift its test, assembly and manufacturing

COMPUTER/ A18

RP joins prayer for world peace

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

MANILA Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin called on all parishes in Metro Manila to support tomorrow's meeting of world religious leaders in Assisi, Italy, by observing a vigil for peace today.

"(The Multi-Faith Day of Prayer) is a truly powerful gesture of solidarity with all people who yearn for the end of hostilities, the cessation of wars, the healing of wounds, the salvation of the innocent and suffering poor," Sin said in a statement released by the Archdiocesan Office of Communications.

Fr. James Reuter SJ of the National Office of Mass Media said that the inter-religious prayer day, an initiative led by Pope John Paul

RP/ A18

THEY don't travel light. US soldiers unload their baggage at Edwin Andrews Air Force Base in Zamboanga City.

DENNIS SABANGAN

AFP: Security, not nat'l pride

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL AND PDI BUREAUS

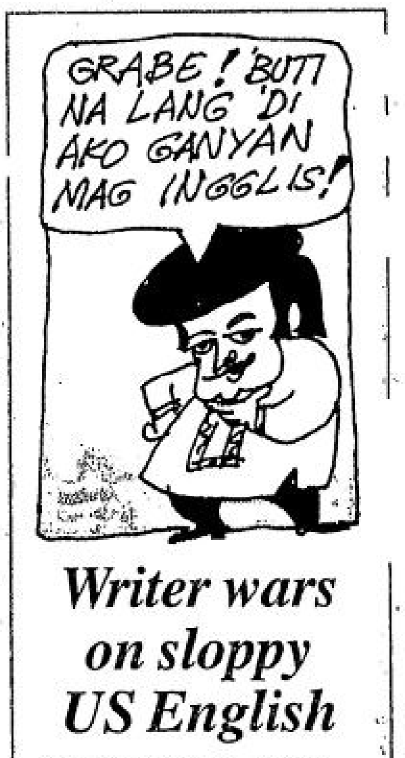
BY the Armed Forces' own admission, Filipino soldiers cannot handle the Abu Sayyaf on their own.

Asked yesterday whether the presence of US troops meant that Filipino soldiers could not cope with the bandits holding hostage two American missionaries and a Filipino nurse in Basilan, AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said this was "admitted."

Apparently to underscore the benefit that Filipinos would be receiving from the RP-US Balikatan exercise, Adan said "some people" were invoking "national pride because they think this is an issue of nationalism or sovereignty."

"But this is (a) security (problem)," he pointed out. "The enemy is knocking at our doors—beheading, bombing. Now we need help, and (the Americans are) saying, 'Here, use these (equipment),'"

AFP/ A18


GRABE! BUTI NA LANG 'DI AKO GANYAN MAG INGGLIS!

Writer wars on sloppy US English

WASHINGTON—Writer Ken Smith is a man on a mission: To clean up American English.

In Smith's opinion, US English-speakers are sloppily serving up the linguistic equivalent of junk food: candy-coated nouns, heaping helpings of jargon and adjectives devoid of

WRITER/ A18

RESIGNED NA, SINIPA PA?

Napocor chief: I'm on leave

By Ronnel V. Domingo

THE BELEAGUERED president of the National Power Corp., Jesus N. Alcordo, said yesterday he has been asked to go "on leave" following the widespread blackout that hit Luzon the other day even as Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. denied that Alcordo had been fired.

Alcordo said he had decided to take Perez's advice that he take a leave and attend to family matters.

An officer in charge would be taking over his post starting today, Alcordo said.

But the Napocor chief clarified that he had resigned as early as November but had been asked to stay on until Malacañang could appoint a replacement.

Later this month, Alcordo will be accompanying Perez and Edgardo del Fonso, president of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp., on a pre-marketing trip to London and New York for the privatization of the National Transmission Corp.

"In effect, I am still president of Napocor until our return on Feb. 4," Alcordo said.

Perez has confirmed that he had asked Alcordo to go on leave but stressed that President Macapagal-Arroyo did not fire Alcordo.

"In fact, instead of (letting him go), we only advised him to take a leave so he could attend to his personal problems," he said.

When Alcordo shall have settled everything, he was welcome to return to Napocor, Perez said.

Perez said replacement for Alcordo would have been named by the end of the month.

INQUIRER sources say that it would likely be somebody from outside Napocor.

Alcordo said that the blackout on Monday was caused by a contractor's bulldozer hitting one of Napocor's power posts (not a steel tower as earlier reported).

"Secretary Perez and I personally went to inspect the site (and the bulldozer was definitely there)," he said.

He admitted that the there were "lapses in management supervision" as the contractor, Schneider Electric, had failed to immediately inform Napocor of the incident.

The groundwire had finally snapped on Monday after dangling precariously since Sunday, he said.

Alcordo said a team has been sent to thoroughly investigate the matter.

He said he would welcome an investigation by any independent body to find the real cause of the blackout.

Napocor data show that the power firm loses about P10 million in revenues for every hour of complete system failure.

ALCORDO

Suit poised vs contractor for Luzon-wide blackout

THE STATE-RUN National Power Corp. is considering legal action against a contractor for the accident that left 35 million people without electricity on Monday, a Napocor spokesperson said yesterday.

Electricity was restored in Luzon at 9 p.m. on Monday, eight hours after high-voltage transmission lines were put out of commission near Tayabas town in Quezon province, Napocor spokesperson Josephine Mangila said.

She said a bulldozer had accidentally hit a power pylon in the area on Sunday, apparently causing the lightning arrestor wire on top of the structure to collapse on the cables beneath it that transmit electricity generated by the country's power plants.

"We are considering legal action," Mangila said over dzBB radio.

Napocor staff are gathering evidence at the site and a decision would be made shortly, she added.

The unnamed Napocor contractor was installing new transmission facilities for a newly built power plant that runs on natural gas, Mangila said.

Unreported

The accident blacked out Luzon for the second time in three months. Technical problems were blamed on the previous outage last November.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez identified a sub-contractor, the French-based Schneider Electric, as the owner of the bulldozer that caused the accident.

Sen. Renato Cayetano said the accident had gone unreported, and blamed the sub-contractor and the field people of the National Transmission Corp. who failed to report the accident that happened last Sunday to energy authorities.

Quoting energy officials, he explained that the Napocor sub-contractor repairing an overhead ground wire in a Tayabas substation had to take it off its huge steel supports.

"They had to transfer the line to wooden poles while undertaking the repairs," said Cayetano.

Last Sunday, however, a wayward bulldozer mowed down the wooden poles holding the high-voltage lines, Cayetano explained.

Owing to the accident, the lines, which should be held taut, began to sag and snapped completely at about 1:10 p.m. on Monday, causing a short circuit. This was accompanied by loud blasts at the Tayabas sub-station.

Short circuit

The short circuit affected two major transmission lines—the Tayabas-Kalayaan 230kv and the Tayabas-Dasmariñas 500kv—which bring power generated by the South Luzon-based plants to Metro Manila and its environs.

The energy department explained in a press statement yesterday that Napocor was able to fully restore power to the affected areas at 9:04 p.m. on Monday. Power plants, which disengaged from the system following the transmission line tripping have been put back onstream, it said.

The Napocor has also lined up more power plants on standby to ensure the stability of the country's power plants, the statement said.

Cayetano said the sub-contractor and engineering field personnel of the Napocor and the National Transmission Corp. should be held liable for not reporting the accident.

He said an investigation should also determine if the accident could have been intentional as to constitute "sabotage."

"Or was it really gross negligence? The public should know," said Cayetano.

"Napocor officials informed us that they were not informed about the Sunday accident. They said that had they known about it, they would have been able to do something," Cayetano said.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel said that all those found guilty of gross negligence "should be made to pay for the damage caused to businesses."

Monday's blackout was the second power outage in as many months. ***AFP with a report from Rocky Nazareno***

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Desierto sees speedy trial for Estradas

BY N. BORDADORA

DESIERTO

THE PROSECUTION of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada could be wound up within six months following the Supreme Court decision to form a special division to hear the plunder charge and other related cases against Estrada, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto said.

Desierto said that with a Sandiganbayan division exclusively tasked to hear the criminal raps against the ousted leader, he is willing to undergo as much as 12 grueling hours a week of court litigation just to wrap up the people's case against Estrada.

"The prosecution has more than 40 witnesses to take the stand but we the prosecution can finish its case in six months. If we have to go through 12 hours a week of hearing, we will do it," Desierto told reporters.

He has suggested holding half-day hearings for five days or whole-day hearings for three days of the week.

"We can now schedule more days of trial. We can now schedule more trial days every week, even double the schedule," said the lead prosecutor in the Estrada trial.

SC's wisdom

In a news briefing at his office yesterday, Desierto lauded the Supreme Court for its "wisdom" in creating a special court to speed up the resolution of the Estrada cases following successive delays in the Sandiganbayan's Third Division.

"We expect that there will be no more delays in the trial which will be good not only for the prosecution and the defense but also for the people of this country who are keenly and eagerly awaiting the results of this case," Desierto said.

Estrada's trial suffered several delays toward the end of last year, the last and the most detrimental being the indefinite leave of absence by Third Division chair Justice Anacleto Badoy.

Re-raffle

This prompted the Estrada defense lawyers to request that the case be raffled off again.

The prosecution opposed this. Instead it asked the Supreme Court to create a special division to try the Estrada cases.

"The creation of this special division would definitely cause the cases (against Estrada) to move faster," said Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

The high court on Monday created a special court to handle the Estrada cases. Acting Presiding Justice Minita Chico-Nazario was appointed chair of the special division with Edilberto Sandoval and Teresita Leonardo de Castro to comprise the special division.

Moot and academic

"The resolution covers all cases including the perjury and (illegal use of an) alias cases… these are means by which plunder is committed, therefore they should be transferred to the special division," said lawyer Ismael Khan, the SC's public information officer.

Desierto said the case to inhibit De Castro from hearing the plunder case, filed by Estrada's lawyers, has been rendered moot and academic by the Supreme Court resolution creating the new division.

De Castro is a member of the Sandiganbayan Third Division that was hearing the Estrada plunder case.

"The Supreme Court has spoken with the appointment of Justice de Castro to the special division," Desierto added.

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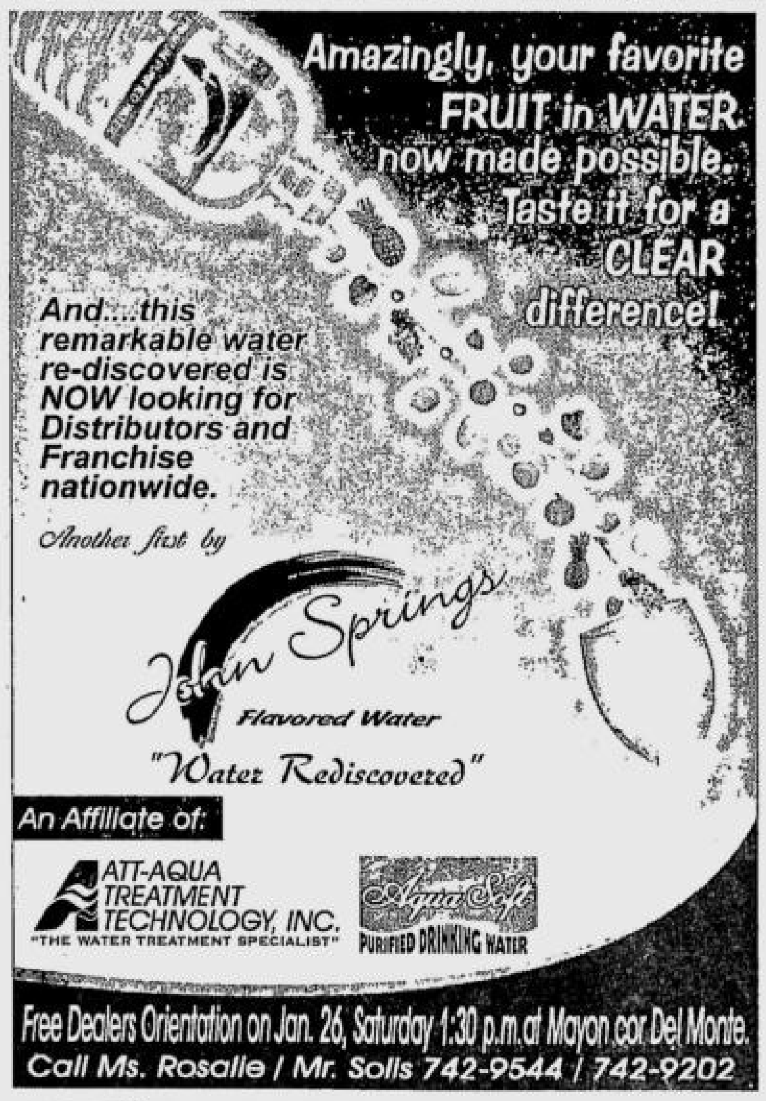

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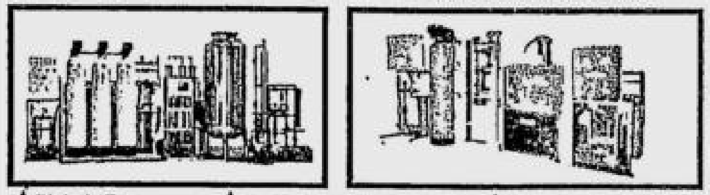

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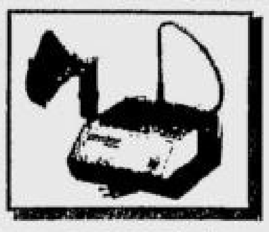

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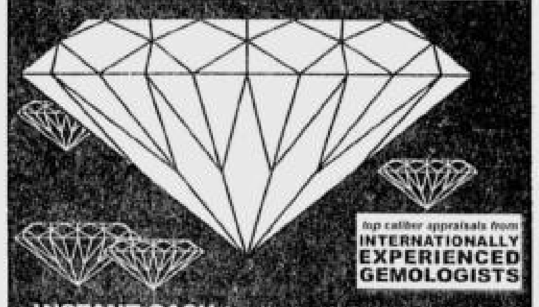

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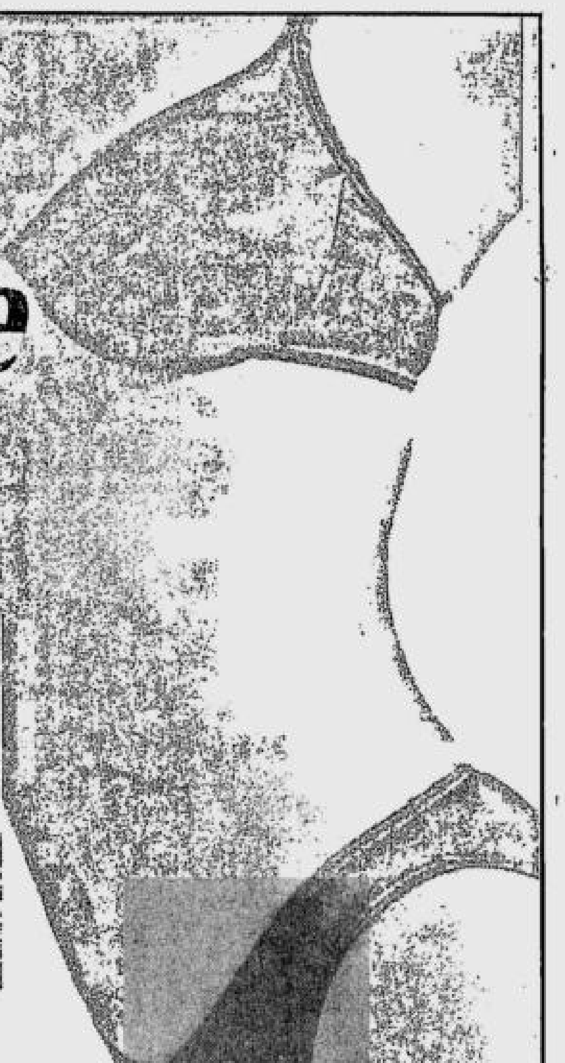

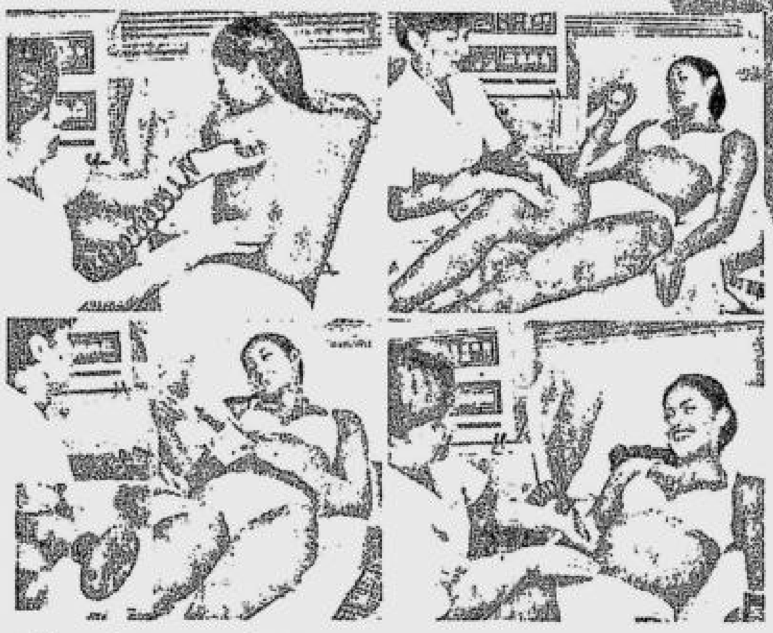

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Camacho will have to wait another day

DESPITE the presence of big-name supporters from the business community, legislators yesterday refused to be rushed into confirming Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho whose woes at the Congressional Commission on Appointments appear to be neverending.

After being raked over the coals by Sen. John Osmeña late last year for the allegedly rampant rice smuggling in Cebu, Camacho was yesterday grilled over the same issue by another Cebu politician, Rep. Clavell Martinez who cited four incidents of rice smuggling at the Cebu International Port in December alone.

Camacho said he knew of only two of the four smuggling incidents that Martinez cited.

Camacho's earlier run-in with Osmeña resulted in the sacking of Cebu customs collector Santiago Maravillas who was replaced by Roberto Sacramento.

It was under Sacramento's watch that the four incidents of rice smuggling occurred.

Camacho was earlier grilled by opposition Sen. Blas Ople on the allegedly illegal issuance of P10-billion worth of peace bonds in favor of CODE-NGO, an umbrella group of nongovernment organizations headed by his sister.

Camacho explained that he was not yet finance secretary when the transaction was initiated.

He said that when he was appointed secretary, he inhibited himself from all negotiations referring to the CODE-NGO peace bonds.

Sen. Ralph Recto, the chair of the CA committee on finance, said he knew even before the hearing was suspended that Camacho would not be confirmed yesterday.

He said Senators Teresa Aquino-Oreta and Edgardo Angara have reserved the right to question Camacho and had asked for one more hearing.

"But this is not a bypass," said Recto who said that if it had been left to him, he would have wanted to confirm Camacho immediately as he would be representing President Macapagal-Arroyo in the World Economic Forum in New York late this month.

Recto said the committee decided to suspend the hearing for another date "for lack of material time." ***Rocky Nazareno and Clarissa S. Batino***

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I'll be back, Nida Blanca hubby vows

ROD Lauren Strunk, who flew to the United States on Monday night, will be back in the country after two weeks, police officials said yesterday.

"He said he would go there to attend to his ailing mother and would return after two weeks," said Director Nestorio Gualberto, head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

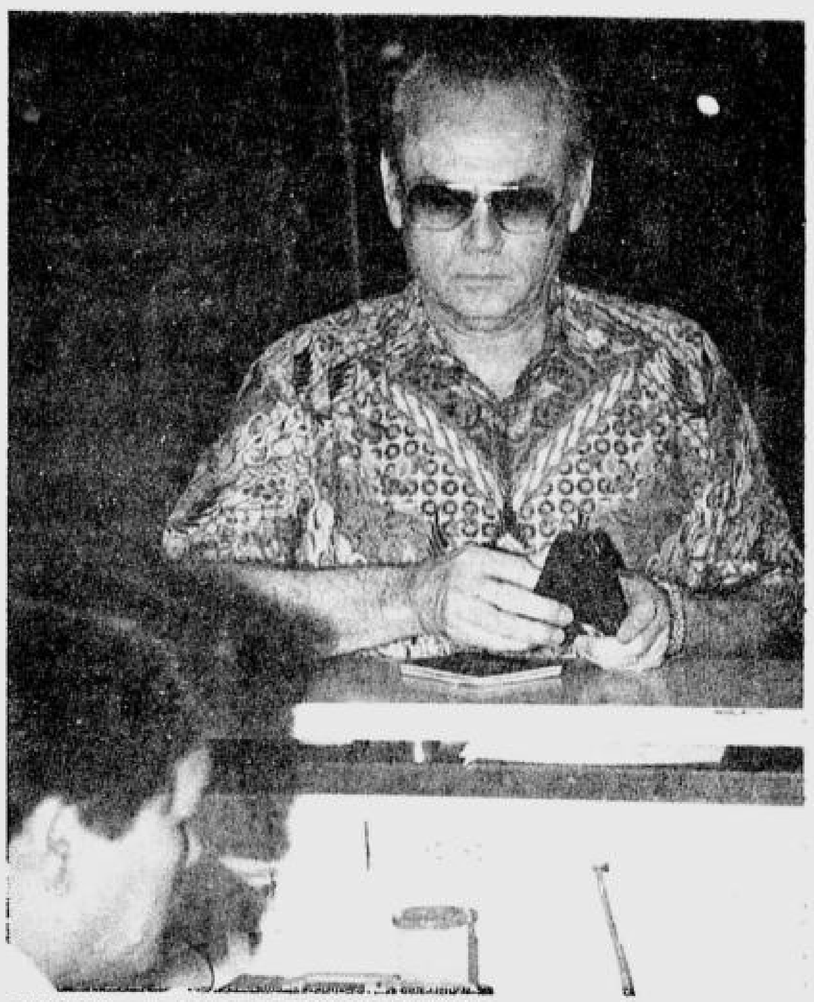
Strunk made this promise to Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation before flying to the US, he said.

The husband of murdered actress Nida Blanca, took a Philippine Airlines flight for California to attend to his leukemia-stricken mother, who has been given only a few days to live.

Strunk was on the watchlist of the Bureau of Immigration prior to his departure.

"We couldn't hold him since no charges were filed against him," said Gualberto, who led the investigation of Blanca's murder and who later came under fire after the self-confessed killer Philip Medel recanted his confession in November last year.

The NBI has since taken over the investigation of the case from the CIDG.



STRUNK goes through the immigration counter before departure Monday night.
ROGER MARGALLO

Ghosts of Cory gov't haunt Gloria

By Gerald G. Lacuarta
and Philip C. Tubeza

THE GHOSTS of the Aquino administration have come to haunt the government of the second woman president to be installed by a people power revolution.

Thousands of farmers led by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) and the Kilusang Enero 22 (KE22) marched to Mendiola yesterday after a protest vigil at the US Embassy to demand justice for the 13 farmers killed in the infamous Mendiola Massacre of Jan. 23, 1987.

Apart from calls for the prosecution of those responsible and for genuine agrarian reform, the protesting farmers also condemned the alleged "rising state fascism" under the Macapagal administration and the deployment of US troops in Mindanao.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo continues to follow in the footsteps of her predecessors by drowning out the farmers' demands for justice and genuine land reform," said KMP chair Rafael Mariano.

To dramatize their indignation at what they branded as intensifying state repression and US direct intervention, the protesters set fire to an effigy of the President dressed in military fatigues and waving the US flag.

The farmers were joined by the widows of the victims of the Mendiola Massacre.

"She (Ms Macapagal) said she would help us within two weeks' time, but now a year has passed but nothing has happened," said Tessie Arjona, the widow of Danilo Arjona, one of those who died when anti-riot troops of the Western Police District under its superintendent B/Gen. Alfredo Lim and the Philippine Marines under the command of Maj. Filemon Gazmin fired on a rally of peasants demanding genuine land reform under the newly installed Aquino administration.

After the shooting, 13 people, all farmers, were dead and more than 80 were wounded.

The 13 farmers, who came from Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog were Arjona, Leopoldo Alonzo, Adelfa Aribe, Dionisio Bautista, Roberto Caylao, Vicente Campomanes, Ronilo Dumanico, Dante Evangelio, Angelito Gutierrez, Rodrigo Grampan, Bernabe Laquindanum, Sonny Boy Perez and Roberto Yumul.

The widowed 44-year-old Tessie Arjona, who was left to raise five children alone, was joined by some relatives and friends at the Don Chino Roces Bridge yesterday.

Tessie Arjona related that during last year's anniversary, Ms Macapagal held a dialogue in Malacañang with the group of protesters that she had joined.

The President had promised concrete results "within two weeks" on their demand for justice and genuine land reform but nothing has happened, said Tessie.

She and a massacre survivor, Rod Flores, of Nueva Ecija, vowed to return to Mendiola every year.

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'COMMIE' SURVEY

Gloria Ibon fan no more

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

HAS the President stopped being a "fan" of Ibon Foundation Databank?

The Sta. Mesa-based independent economic research center yesterday asked this question as it denied being a communist front organization as alleged by President Macapagal-Arroyo, following the release of an Ibon survey showing a negative 8.7 approval rating for the President nationwide.

Rosario Bella Guzman, Ibon Foundation executive director, noted that Ms Macapagal was "once a fan of Ibon."

Guzman recalled an occassion at the height of the anti-Estrada campaign in 2000, during a economic forum at UP Manila, when Ms Macapagal, then the Vice President, was "all praises for Ibon Foundation for its credibility and reliable data, for what it stands for and for its valuable role in education."

"She even added that she used Ibon publications as a teacher of economics, and said that she would refrain from repeating what I had already said in my talk," Guzman said, still recalling the incident.

Surprised

Guzman said she was therefore surprised to read Ms Macapagal's statements calling Ibon a communist front following the release of the survey results on the eve of the anniversary of People Power II on Jan. 20.

"Nevertheless I find it amusing that the President has taken to resurrecting the communist bogey instead of reflecting on how disaffected the masses has become with her leadership," Guzman said in a statement.

Ms Macapagal, interviewed by Malacañang reporters on Sunday, said: "Every time Ibon makes a survey, I always have low ratings. It's not a secret that Ibon is one of the legal organizations of the Communist Party of the Philippines, so certainly they have a particular agenda."

No communist front

But Guzman denied Ibon Foundation was a communist front. She said the research center's agenda was to document, analyze and disseminate socio-economic information and analysis especially as these relate to government programs and policies that detrimental to the people.

"Shouldn't that be also on your agenda, Ma'am?" Guzman asked Ms Macapagal.

The Ibon survey also revealed that the net satisfaction rating of the Macapagal administration in Metro Manila was negative 6.67 percent in the last quarter of last year, way below the 19.20 percent satisfaction rating it got in the October 2001 Ibon survey.

With regard to their perception on how the economy was doing, 58.01 percent of the respondents said the economy was worse in 2001 while only 4.58 believed it was doing better.

De Venecia asked: What's your agenda?

THE POLITICAL opposition wants Speaker Jose de Venecia to clarify to them the objective and agenda of the proposed national political summit being organized by supporters of the Macapagal administration.

This was because the Senate and House opposition fear that the national political summit may be used to show that the administration has a "semblance of support" from the opposition, according to House minority leader Carlos Padilla yesterday.

"Why should we join the political summit? Even her friends are divided. Let them unite first," Padilla said.

Padilla and some of the 18-member House minority bloc met with their counterparts in the Senate led by Senators Edgardo Angara, Blas Ople and Rodolfo Biazon, on Monday night.

He said aside from taking up the offer of De Venecia for the opposition to join the proposed national political summit, the opposition in both Houses also discussed their common stand on the Absentee Voting bill and the bill seeking to postpone the barangay elections.

The House minority floor leader said the opposition was still "not ready" to reply on De Venecia's invitation until the Speaker first defines the "objective, agenda, parameters and terms of engagement" of the political summit.

De Venecia had earlier sought a political summit to "remove the poison in the political atmosphere," following criticisms made against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Speaker formally invited the opposition to the proposed political summit last week.

In Monday's meeting, the opposition also agreed to block any bid of Congress to postpone the barangay elections set to be held this May, Padilla disclosed.

A bill seeking to postpone the barangay elections is pending in the House.

Padilla noted that the bill seeking to postpone the barangay elections this May was not included among the priority bills that were laid out by the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council, thus making it difficult for the measure to be passed before May.

Padilla said the opposition also wants the leadership in both houses to hold in abeyance the chambers' consideration and approval of the Absentee Voting bill, which would grant seven to eight million Filipinos based abroad the right to vote in national elections starting 2004.

He said that the Senate has initiated the holding of public hearings on the bill in key cities abroad and that the opposition would like to "await the results of the hearings."

Padilla said that the opposition made this stand because they heard that the House leadership wants the measure to be approved as soon as possible.

The bill is now being discussed in plenary after a committee report on it has been submitted.

Man hacks dead wife, 3 children

A 30-YEAR-OLD farmer was arrested after he allegedly hacked to death seven relatives—including his wife and three children—as they were sleeping, police reported yesterday.

One of the farmer's nieces was wounded in the attack before dawn Friday in Siayan town, according to a report filed by Supt. Alejandro Lipana, police chief for Zamboanga del Norte.

Lipana said the farmer's brother-in-law, who owns the house where the alleged attacker and his family were temporarily staying, heard a commotion inside and saw the man hacking and stabbing the victims.

The man said he tried to stop the farmer but was overpowered so he fled to seek help from neighbors.

The farmer escaped but was later caught hiding in a nearby forest.

Lipana reported the man, who claimed he "was out of his mind," was poverty-stricken and often failed to feed his sickly children. **AP**

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MODEL	SRP	Amount Financed		Monthly Installments			Comparison	
		0% INTEREST (25% of the amount financed)	REGULAR (75% of the amount financed)	0% INTEREST	REGULAR	TOTAL (A)	100% REGULAR (B)	SAVINGS (difference of A & B x 48 Mos.)
Cefiro Elite	P 1,310,000	P 262,000	P 786,000	P 5,458	P 22,680	**P 28,138**	P 30,240	P 100,896
Exalta 1.5MT	P 688,000	P 137,600	P 412,800	P 2,867	P 11,911	**P 14,778**	P 15,882	P 52,992
Verita	P 698,000	P 139,600	P 418,800	P 2,908	P 12,084	**P 14,992**	P 16,113	P 53,808

Note: Stretched zero interest plan is also available for 24 & 36 months & other passenger car models of NMPI.

• LOW DOWNPAYMENT SCHEME

MODEL	SRP	DOWN PAYMENT	60 Mos.	48 Mos.	36 Mos.
Exalta 1.5MT	P 688,000	P 88,600	P 13,853	P 16,144	P 20,027
Verita	P 698,000	P 90,600	P 14,054	P 16,379	P 20,318

Note: 18 to 24 months terms also available
Low downpayment plan is also available for other passenger car models of NMPI

Offer good until January 31, 2002.

• ZERO INTEREST FINANCING SCHEME (12 MONTHS TERM)
(50% downpayment based on SRP)

MODEL	SRP	Monthly Installment
Cefiro Elite	P 1,310,000	P 54,584
Exalta 1.5MT	P 688,000	P 28,667
Verita	P 698,000	P 29,084

Note: Zero interest plan is also available for other passenger car models of NMPI
Monthly installment is computed on 50% amount financed

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No 'pilot's error,' please

"PILOT error" should no longer be used to explain the latest tragedy involving the Italian-made Agusta trainer jet S-211 that has earned for itself the bizarre monicker as "widow-makers."

This was pointed out by Sen. Vicente Sotto III whose nephew, First Lt. Raymond de Guzman, was the pilot of the ill-fated S-211 that crashed on Jan. 14 in Nueva Ecija and claimed four other lives.

"Perhaps the only error committed by our pilots here is waking up on that fateful morning of Jan. 14 and flying the PAF's S-211," Sotto said in a privilege speech.

Sotto noted that the S-211 had been involved in past crashes but, after investigation, these were "routinely blamed on pilot's error."

He added that he had been informed that "such a finding is insurance-friendly and non-adversarial."

"No heads roll, no relations with other countries put to test and no findings of graft and corruption, no feelings are ruffled, except those of the families of the deceased," Sotto said.

Present at the Senate gallery were members of the families of De Guzman and his co-pilot First Lt. Leo Maurice Ramos.

Both pilots left young pregnant wives, Sotto said.

"Shall we allow another 'pilot's error' finding to conveniently surface or should this Chamber send a signal that we shall be watching the investigation that will be held to determine the cause of this tragedy?" Sotto declared.

I AM PROUD TO BE A MAPUAN !

Antonio S. Abacan, Jr. graduated from Mapua Institute of Technology with a degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, major in Banking and Finance.

Tony, as his friends and peers fondly call him, rose from the ranks. From where he was not so many years ago, Tony is now a prominent figure in the Philippine banking industry. He is now the president of Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company, the country's largest bank. Tony also holds chairmanships and other positions in many other companies and foundations. He has been named *Outstanding Bulakeño* by the Bulacan provincial government and has received many awards and citations from different institutions.

Above all, Tony is an active supporter of Mapua Tech alumni projects. As a true Mapuan, Tony continues to serve his fellow alumni and his Alma Mater.

ANTONIO S. ABACAN, JR.
BA '62 TOM '87
President
Metropolitan Bank
and Trust Company

Mapua Tech and the National Association of Mapua Alumni (NAMA) are truly proud of the achievements of Mr. Antonio S. Abacan, Jr. in the Philippine banking industry. Tony, on the other hand, is proud to be a Mapuan!

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ESTRADA nominees (from left) Allan Lee, Hermogenes Tantoco, Espiridion Laxa and Benjamin Paulino take their oath in yesterday's hearing.

SMC defied Gloria–Joker

By Cynthia D. Balana

SAN MIGUEL Corp. had ignored President Macapagal-Arroyo's letter endorsing five names to represent the Presidential Commission on Good Government in the SMC board.

This was according to Sen. Joker Arroyo and PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza after lawyer Francis Jardeleza, SMC corporate secretary, admitted that the letter of the President was not considered.

Testifying before the joint hearings on the committees on blue ribbon and agriculture and food on the coconut levy fund issue, Jardeleza explained that the PCGG was not able to meet the Jan. 20, 2001 deadline for all nominations to the SMC board as stipulated in the SMC by-laws.

But Carranza said it was not possible for the PCGG of the Macapagal administration to do just that since the President assumed the presidency on the same day, Jan. 20, after a popular uprising.

Ms Macapagal lamented that the SMC board resorted to technicality when it did not consider the intervening developments on those days such as the Edsa II and the President's lack of time to immediately form her Cabinet."

He expressed surprise why the President's PCGG nominees at the Social Security System were accommodated unlike in SMC.

Jardeleza was summoned to the hearing to explain how the five appointees of ousted President Joseph Estrada managed to get elected as directors in the last SMC stockholders meeting despite Ms Macapagal's submission of her own nominees.

The five Estrada appointees were Dr. Raul de Guzman, Dr. Hermogenes Tantoco, lawyer Espiridion Laxa, lawyer Benjamin Paulino and businessman Allan Lee.

According to Jardeleza, while the five were PCGG appointees during the Estrada administration, they got elected as directors in the last stockholders' meeting by virtue of the votes of the 14 companies which were originally registered as the owners of the 27 percent shares now controlled by the PCGG.

"It is always the registered shareholder who will cast the vote and in this case, the 14 corporations executed a proxy," Jardeleza said. "And because of the proxy votes of the 14 corporations, the five became directors since they were included in the common slate of the (SMC) management."

Carranza complained that the PCGG tried to cast their votes during the SMC meeting but that they were not given ballots by the SMC management.

This was why the five Estrada appointees claimed that they did not owe the PCGG anything and that its fidelity should be to the corporation and to the whole stockholders that elected them.

The PCGG earlier complained that the five Estrada appointees claimed to be representatives of the PCGG but never reported to the commission since Ms Macapagal took over Malacañang.

Lee explained that their role in the SMC board was to protect the interests of the corporation and the whole shareholders, including the 27 percent sequestered shares.

Laxa said that a director of the board must always act according to the interests of the holders and in this case, the 14 corporations.

The five, however, admitted that they did not know their principals and did not know whose votes they were casting since no one knows the real owners of these 14 corporations.

Paulino explained that while they were nominated by the previous PCGG, he said they were never assigned shares of stock because they themselves had enough in that company.

Asked how would they vote both as PCGG nominees and as directors of the SMC board in case there was a conflict between interests of the coconut farmers as represented by the 27 percent shares and the SMC management, the five said that situation has never occurred.

MAPUA TECH AND NAMA TO HONOR THE OUTSTANDING MAPUAN (TOM) AWARDEES FOR THE YEAR 2002

AWARDS NIGHT FOR THE OUTSTANDING MAPUAN (TOM) AWARDEES FOR 2002 SET ON JANUARY 24, 2002 AT THE MANDARIN ORIENTAL MANILA BALLROOM

MAPUA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MAPUA ALUMNI (NAMA) will honor 21 of the most distinguished graduates of Mapua Tech as THE OUTSTANDING MAPUAN (TOM) AWARDEES for the year 2002.

Nine of the awardees come from various fields of professional practice. Six from various fields of specialized endeavors and service and six were cited for their international endeavors.

Dr. Reynaldo B. Vea, President and CEO of Mapua Institute of Technology and NAMA President, Engineer Cesar D. Castro, will hand the TOM trophies to this year's TOM Awardees. They will be assisted by Engineer Oscar de Venecia and Ms. Milagros V. Reyes, Chairman and Co-Chair, respectively. Engineer Joel J. Marciano was the the chairman of the Mapua Tech-NAMA 2002 TOM Search And Awards Committee with Engineer Danilo S. Ignacio, Engineer Jaime F. Cancio, Dean Miriam E. Necesito and Engineer Hugo T. Perez.

The joint Mapua Tech-NAMA Board of Judges for this year's TOM Awards was headed by Engineer Oscar de Venecia who is at present Chairman and President of Basic Consolidated, Inc. and Ms. Milagros V. Reyes, Mapua Tech's Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. Members were Engineer Ernesto V. Villanueva representing the Foundation of Outstanding Mapuans, Inc. (FOMI), Dr. Ma. Consuelo V. Flora, Mapua Tech's Vice President for Academic Affairs, Engineer Winston M. Ilicito, representing the Mapua Tech Faculty, Engineer Willington K.K.C. Tan, immediate past president of NAMA and Engineer Joel J. Marciano.

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Indon says terror suspect is his son

JAKARTA—A man arrested in the Philippines for suspected links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network is the son of an Indonesian local legislator, a report said Tuesday.

"I read reports about an Indonesian being arrested in the Philippines along with 13 other people, who are accused of being members of al-Qaida," said M. Zainuri, quoted by the Republika daily.

"But I just learned that the Indonesian man is my son when police came to my house to inform me," said Zainuri, a council member from the Muslim-based Crescent and Star Party in the Madiun district of East Java province.

Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi was arrested on Jan. 15 in connection with a series of deadly bombings in the Philippines in 2000.

Philippine police said al-Ghozi was detained based on information from Singapore that he was a key leader of the Jemaah Islamiya, an Islamic "terror group operating in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia."

They believed he had links to al-Qaida, the network of accused terror mastermind Bin Laden.

The Philippine police said al-Ghozi's arrest led police in the southern Philippines on Jan. 17 to seize a cache of explosives and weapons meant for attacks in Southeast Asian countries and to arrest three Muslim Filipino associates.

The police said al-Ghozi had given funding and bomb components to a principal suspect in bombings in Manila in December 2000 that claimed more than a dozen lives.

But Zainuri said he did not believe his son had been involved in terrorist acts.

"We rest the case to Allah. We pray that our son be given patience and strength," he said.

Zainuri said he had rarely met al-Ghozi since he left home and studied at an Islamic boarding school in Central Java province.

A childhood friend described his son as a reserved man. "Fathur was a quiet kid and didn't like to fool around," Rojak told Republika.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirayuda on Monday said al-Ghozi had lived longer in Singapore than in Indonesia and cautioned against hastily labeling him as connected to al-Qaida.

"We are still seeking clarification because our information from the Singapore media said that this man has long lived there (in Singapore) and took a wife from Malaysia," he said.

"We should not link everything with al-Qaida," Wirayuda added.

Indonesian police said it was not certain the man was an Indonesian national.

Philippine police said al-Ghozi had been an explosives expert with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a Muslim separatist group that has since opened peace talks with Manila.

Indonesian police yesterday said they would question a militant Muslim cleric who is suspected by Malaysian authorities of involvement in international terrorism.

Malaysian authorities believe Abu Bakar Bashir is the ringleader of an extremist Islamic group with links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Bashir, who often travels to Malaysia, heads the Indonesian Mujahidin Council, a little-known and recently formed group that is campaigning for an Islamic state in Indonesia.

"We have shared information with partners in Malaysia. We are going to summon Bashir officially this week," said Brig. Gen. Edward Aritonang, a national police spokesperson.

The Malaysian organization allegedly is linked to Bashir, the Malaysian mujahideen group, is reportedly linked to Afghanistan's former Taliban regime and other radical groups in Southeast Asia which share the goal of establishing Islamic states in Malaysia, Indonesia and the southern Philippines.

A lawyer for Bashir said his client would turn up for questioning, but denied that he had any links to al-Qaida. *AFP, AP*

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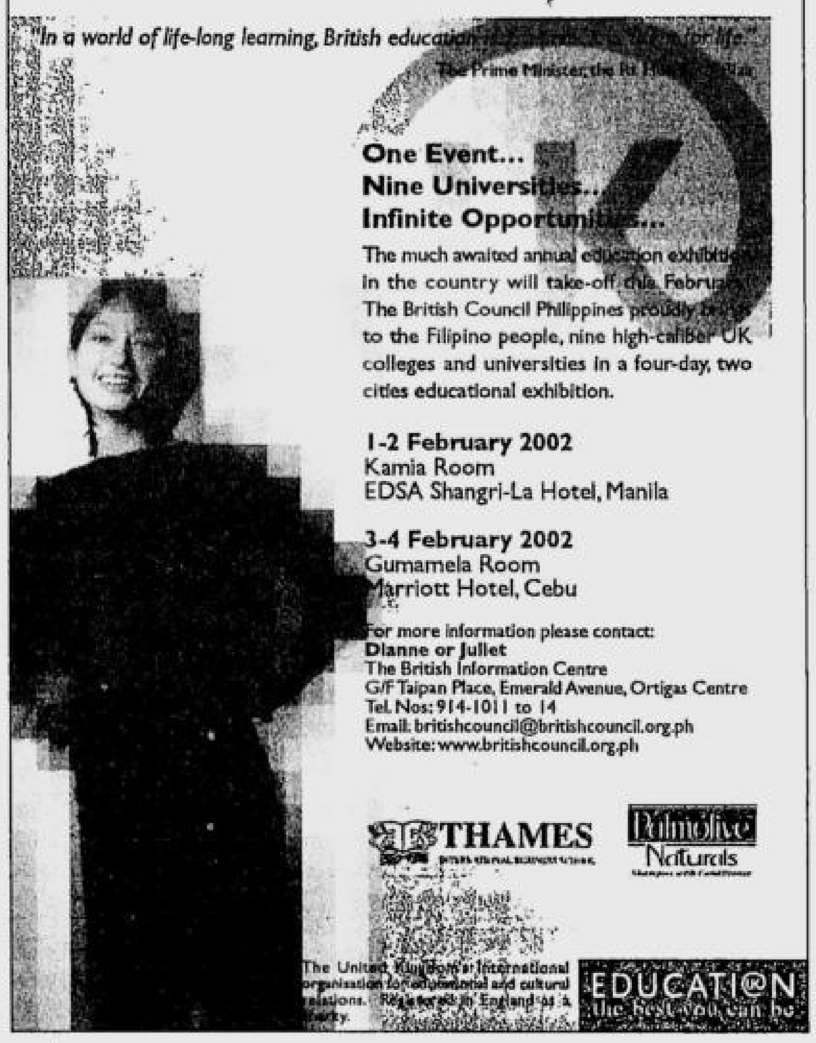
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A Time To Reflect

(Global Competitiveness Part X)

Despite a harsh internal and external environment last year, the economy posted a positive GNP growth of 3.7%, unlike many of our neighbors who are in recession. Prices of prime commodities are stable. Inflation and interest rates are at low record levels. We had respectable growth in agriculture, services and information technology - three priority areas of the Government. Also, Government met its targeted budget deficit.

Yet, there are discordant voices of divisiveness and discontent.

This should make us wonder: Why are we unable to have a moratorium on things that divide us and not able to focus on things that unite us?

WHAT WE CAN DO

We have to look forward and implement the commitments made at the National Economic Summit held last December 10th.

FOR THE BUSINESS SECTOR

We will focus on do-able things within the next six months, namely:

- Minimize layoffs
- Help in retraining workers to acquire skills needed by the 21st Century Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- Diversify or expand into high-value agricultural and fishery products
- Observe good corporate governance
- Help in curbing smuggling, traffic and garbage problems
- Strengthen the local economy by actively encouraging the patronage of Philippine products thru the Buy Pinoy Movement

Our performance will be measured against our targets periodically. Within six months, business will make an accounting of what we have done.

POLITICAL SUMMIT

The opposition's acknowledgment that President Arroyo should finish her term until 2004 sets the stage for a political summit that will hopefully focus on the need for critical collaboration and a moratorium on adversarial politics.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMIT

At the same time, a separate intelligence summit should focus on improving peace and order, solving kidnapping and the Mindanao problem. Such a summit should have the active participation of civil society and anti-crime groups.

LET US UNITE AND MOVE FORWARD

We must have a moratorium on things that divide us and focus on the things that unite us.

We must regroup. We must unite. We must move forward.

Our survival demands nothing less.

Raul Concepcion

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EDITORIALS

Light

ONE year after the people judged Joseph Estrada guilty of corruption and incompetence, among other things, and drove him out of Malacañang, it is far from certain that he will be convicted by a court of law. At the rate his trial for plunder, perjury and other crimes has been going, the Sandiganbayan might still be hearing his case on Judgment Day.

Blame that first on his lawyers who have made delay their first line of defense. They have filed no less than 80 motions and petitions apparently to ensure that the case would not be submitted for decision until a friendlier administration is in power, or possibly never. Blame the delay also on government prosecutors who at times appear to be in a hurry to lose the case, causing concern among the private lawyers who have volunteered to help to put the former president in Death Row. And blame finally the Sandiganbayan, which is burdened not only with cases but also old age, infirmity and the bloated egos of justices angling for a place in history.

Now the Supreme Court has stepped in to put the anti-graft court in order. On Monday, the Supreme Court announced the creation of a special division to try the cases against Estrada, saying it had become necessary to take this course of action because of the "importance of the immediate resolution of the cases to the Filipino people and the Philippine government." The special division headed by Justice Mineta V. Chico Nario has been given the express mandate "to hear, try and decide with dispatch" the plunder case against Estrada.

With the creation of the special division, the Supreme Court seems to have cleared all the obstacles to a speedy trial inside the Sandiganbayan itself. But even with Justice Anacleto Badoy, whom they had accused of bias against their client, out of the case, the defense lawyers are not about to change their strategy. They also want to get rid of Justice Teresita de Castro, the only holdover from the Third Division that has been trying the case.

It seems that Estrada's lawyer will never run out of excuses to delay the trial. The first order of business of the special division is to tell them in no uncertain terms that enough is enough.

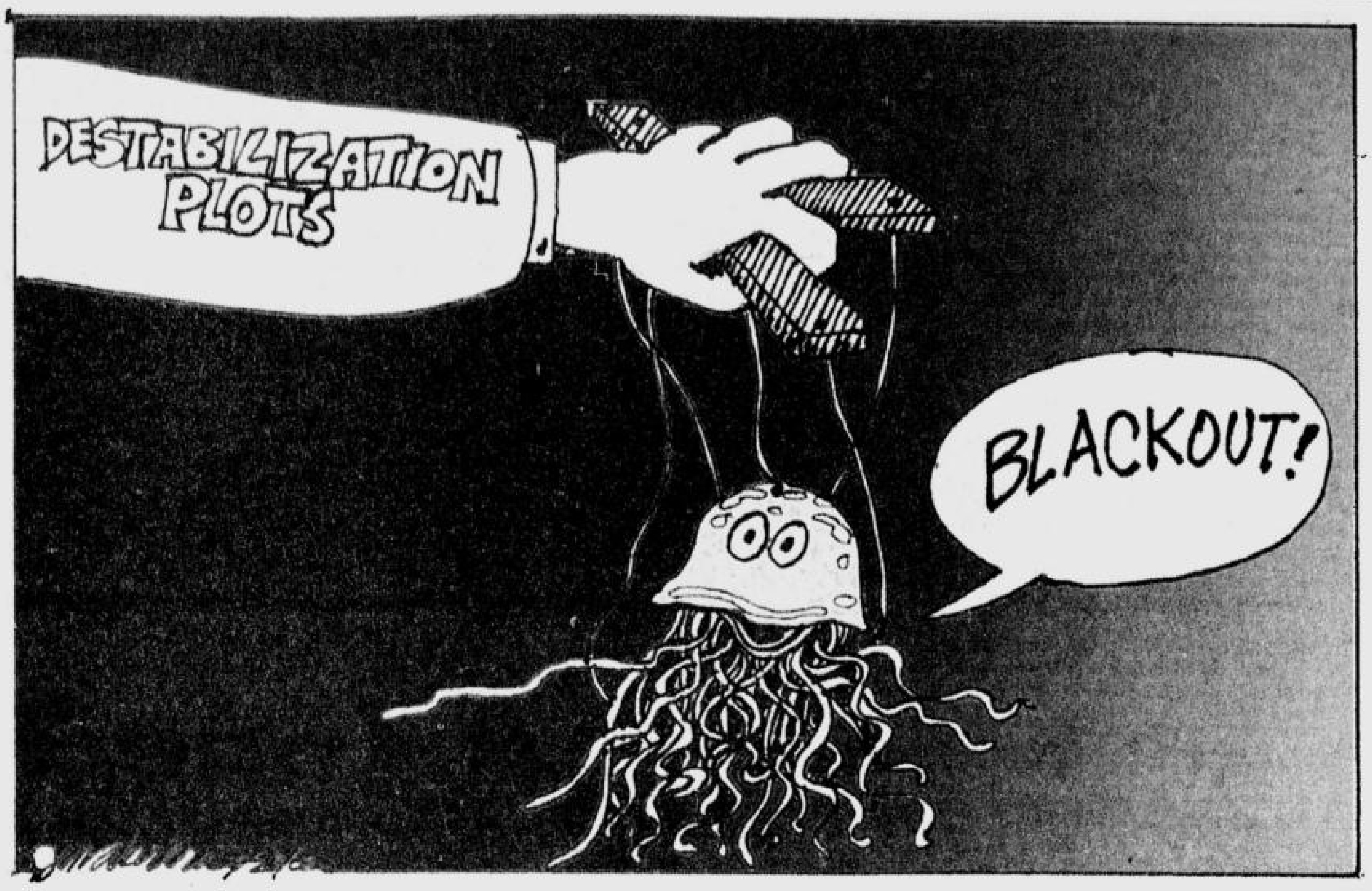
Darkness

PERHAPS Filipinos should learn again to curse the darkness. Instead of lighting a candle when the lights go out these days, they cower in fear, thinking a coup d'état is in progress. It happened last November when a power blackout hit the whole of Luzon, hours after President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo left for Brunei to attend the Asean Summit, and it happened again Monday when power was cut off in Metro Manila as well as most of Luzon.

But then who can blame the people for being panicky at the first sign of trouble? In both instances, the power blackouts were preceded by daily reports about a coup plot being hatched, if not being actually scheduled. The latest one was supposed to coincide with the commemoration last Sunday of the first anniversary of the second people power uprising that toppled Joseph Estrada from the presidency, if some unhappy former allies of Ms Macapagal were to be believed.

Maybe people have become so paranoid that they don't even bother to recall relatively recent history. If they did, they would have remembered that even in these parts where coups are discussed openly, power blackouts have never served as a prelude to a coup. Others may be more comfortable doing their evil deeds in the dark, but putschists don't mind doing their thing in the light of day. Ask Sen. Gregorio Honasan who tried several times to grab power through a coup but ended up in a position of power by going through the route of electoral politics. On the other hand, massive power blackouts were a fact of life in the early 1990s, but there was no whisper of a coup.

After going through the same experience twice in the last two and a half months, Filipinos should learn to take blackouts for what they are: just another manifestation of incompetence in government. In November, a boiler blew up and put one power plant out of commission, setting off a chain of plant shutdowns all over Luzon. This time a wayward bulldozer is being blamed for causing a short circuit that shut off power in a wide area of Luzon. Two years ago, the culprit behind another blackout was a big school of jellyfish. Next time another blackout happens, what entertaining tale will the National Power Corp. tell?



It's the present power system that is at fault

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

HAS it not occurred yet to the Department of Energy and the National Power Corp. that the present system of interconnecting all power plants to one Luzon Grid is faulty? A school of wayward jellyfish wanders into a power plant's cooling system and the whole of Luzon is blacked out. The power generated by one plant goes down a little and the whole Luzon is blacked out. A bulldozer hits a transmission line tower and the whole of Luzon is blacked out. Two Luzon-wide blackouts in two months is too much. Obviously, the system is wrong. Merely replacing the head of the Napocor won't solve the problem. The problem is in the system itself.

Under the present system, all the power plants are interconnected into one grid servicing the entire island of Luzon. It has an automatic power shutdown mechanism that trips and cuts off power when something happens in the grid, either the power shoots up or shoots down, lightning strikes a power line, a transmission line is cut, or a power plant conks out. This is to protect the whole grid from damage in the same way that electricity in your house shuts down when there is a short circuit somewhere in the house.

As experience has shown, this is not good enough. It is so easy to black out the whole of Luzon. Cable thieves can plunge the whole of Luzon into total darkness. Coup artists or terrorists can easily sow confusion in the capital and the rest of Luzon by just throwing a wire across two transmission lines. In fact, every time there is a blackout, people immediately think of a coup.

So when will our power officials realize that the system has to be changed to prevent recurrent blackouts? Or prevent coup plotters or terrorists from doing their thing?

Our power plants—both Napocor-owned and Independent Power Producers—are scattered all over Luzon. Wouldn't it be more practical to have different areas serviced by different power plants so that when one or two break down, the rest of Luzon will continue to have power?

Interconnecting all the power plants in one Luzon Grid may have been practical before, when some power plants had too much power and some areas had no power plants. The situation is not the same anymore. All areas can have a separate power plant, or a group of power plants, independent of one another. With the privatization of Napocor power plants, this arrangement becomes even more practical.

Under the present arrangement, one privately owned power plant can easily sabotage the whole of Luzon simply by turning off its generators. With the grids separated, no power plant or group of power plants can do this. They can shut down power in their service area, but the lights in other areas will not be affected. Compared to the electrical installation in a house, it is like having separate circuit breakers for different parts of the house. When there is a short-circuit in one part, the rest of the lights will continue to function.

But I bet you neither the DOE nor the Napocor will do anything to improve the system even if officials are changed. It is so much easier to just sit back, cross your fingers and hope not another blackout will darken the night during one's watch.

* * *

Why is there so much ado about American soldiers training here with Filipino soldiers? Critics say the GIs may be here to chase the Abu Sayyaf. What's wrong with that? Our own military is getting nowhere with these bandits, isn't it about time we get help? How much longer will our military bumble along until we ask for help? I pity the hostages of the Abu Sayyaf. They must be suffering a lot.

Critics say this is against our Constitution, against the agreement with the United States, a violation of our sovereignty. We are so jealous of our sovereignty now but when a US Phantom jet chased away a rebel plane during a coup attempt against President Cory Aquino, nobody complained that that was a violation of our sovereignty. On the contrary, we applauded when the Phantom jet intruded into Philippine skies to shoo away the rebel plane.

Besides, the GIs have not done anything yet except send our long jobless bar girls in a tizzy. They haven't yet killed or chased a single Abu Sayyaf bandit. They haven't fired a single shot. They just arrived and are setting up camp. So what's the ruckus all about?

In lawyer's lingo, they haven't committed a crime yet, so you cannot file a complaint against them. We have to wait until they do something that violates our sovereignty and our Constitution.

What if it turns out they will only train our own soldiers to become more effective against the Abu Sayyaf who seem to be better trained than our own professional soldiers? All that hot air and energy spent vituperating against our own government and the Americans would have been wasted.

Bottom line

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FRIENDS have been asking me what I think about the controversy over the Peace Bonds.

That controversy, for those who do not know about it yet, has to do with the 10-year zero coupon bonds floated by government last year. Code-NGO, a coalition of NGOs, lobbied for it to raise funds for poverty alleviation projects. The bonds sold at a price that allowed their buyers to profit from selling them in the secondary market. They were auctioned in October last year, Code-NGO participating through RCBC, a government securities dealer. RCBC cornered the majority of the issue, and handed over P1.4 billion of the profit to Code-NGO.

I've read the paper written by the Action for Economic Reforms and I've read Solita Monsod's reply to it last Saturday in her column, and here's how I see it.

The AER makes a very good case for Code-NGO at the very least breaching ethics in a big way. The AER specifically characterizes the deal as "rent-seeking," which means using state power to gain economic privileges. Or more simply, using a position of influence to gain undue advantage over other players. The advantage is normally monopolistic, but it doesn't always have to be so. That of course is the cronies' favorite pastime, investing in power and using it to their (quite literal) profit. The AER suggests that if Code-NGO has not drawn huge pails of water from that well, it has at least drunk from it.

The circumstances surrounding the deal argue so. Code-NGO has admitted that it originally proposed an outright purchase agreement—truly, a rent-seeking arrangement—but that government required an auction instead. But even the auction is flawed. As AER argues, Code-NGO had "privileged, if not sole, access" to it. The other NGOs never knew about it. Nor did other entities, who might have been interested to bid for them. And why not, given that the bonds had been declared reserve eligible by the Monetary Board and exempt from taxes on their sale and retirement by the BIR, a bargain if ever there was one.

Finally, why should RCBC turn over P1.4 billion of the profit to Code-NGO? Code-NGO did not put up any money, its capital was pure *laway*, or spit. It says this was the price of an "innovative idea," but as AER notes, innovative ideas fetch a price only when they are patented or copyrighted. More to the point, suggesting that government float bonds is a brilliant idea worth P1.4 billion?

You get to be technical about the definition of rent-seeking, as my friend Winnie does—but which AER itself invites by invoking it—and you can always punch holes in the concept. You can question whether Code-NGO's activities represent a waste of resources, you can question whether Code-NGO's position was strictly monopolistic. But these technicalities aside, the bottom line is that this is a case of using a position of influence in government (won in the fight to oust Erap) to benefit a private entity. This is certainly **not** a case of government floating bonds that gratuitously profited an NGO that showed rare speculative acumen.

The only other justification for it is that the P1.4 billion is not going to line the pockets of a few individuals but will go to uplift the plight of the poor. Well, this is the part that gets tricky. I know the leaders of Code-NGO, they are friends of mine. I know them to be decent, hardworking and fair-minded. But this brings us to another bottom line, which is the question: Does the means justify the end?

My answer to that then and now is "No." Now more than ever, after having seen in half a century on this earth the monumental perils of being seduced by that proposition.

I agree that civil society should not be naïve or innocent about power, particularly given the competing claims to it, and should use to its advantage when it can have it. I agree that civil society should seek to channel scant national resources to useful ends, particularly in light of competing demands for those resources, much of which goes only to wasting them. But only within the bounds of ethical behavior. That is a premise, perspective, or parameter—call it what you will—that civil society may never lose sight of. To do so is to play Russian roulette with its very reason for being.

It is not only that civil society has always fought a good fight against pelf and privilege, which makes it profoundly ironic that one of its pillars should veer into, or stumble along, that path. It is not only that the credibility of civil society stands to be eroded or even hewed down in one fell swoop by things like this. Though these are huge enough concerns in themselves.

It is also that that how you do things that dictates what you are able to do in the end. The saying that the means does not justify the ends is not just a tremendous Christian insight into life, it is a profoundly commonsensical one. How you do things makes you what you are. You cannot produce a democratic order by undemocratic methods, or by suspending democratic methods first until later when they become more feasible. That later will never come. Wrong methods negate right ends, which is how so many revolutionary governments end up being the tyranny they brought down.

We keep talking about the power of prayer to transform: Even more patent is the power of power to transform, especially unbridled power. I've seen too many friends fall into the trap, the last only during Erap's term. To the very end, some of them were insisting that Erap, scourge that he was, offered a window of opportunity to do good for the masses. Little knowing they themselves had changed for being where they were. I can only be deeply thankful Erap's fall has brought them to their senses. To insist that inveigling P1.4 billion—have we become so cynical as to think that is a petty sum?—offers a window of opportunity to do good to the masses is made of the same stuff. It presumes that wielding of unbridled power will not change its wielder.

I for one am not willing to bet on it—even an infinitesimal fraction of P1.4 billion.

Neither the constituency nor a flash point

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

DIRE expectations of political turbulence on the first anniversary of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's accession to power failed to materialize last Sunday.

The center of the commemoration of People Power II, the Edsa Shrine, was nearly empty, except for a few hundred soldiers and riot police barricading it, and the key leaders of that popular rising, hearing Mass officiated by Jaime Cardinal Sin.

There were protest demonstrations expressing disenchantment over President Macapagal's first-year performance in some cities in the provinces. But in Metro Manila, the demonstrations of leftist organizations on Mendiola and around 3,000 supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, where he is detained, were a far cry from the size of the multitudes that massed at Edsa in February 1986 and January 2001.

Apart from the predictable protest of die-hard Estrada loyalists—such as the People's Movement against Poverty (PMAP), which organized the rally at the VMMC—the other demonstrations represented groups which were once Ms Macapagal's allies in the Erap resign movement and which are now bringing their grievances to the streets. These disgruntled allies, mainly from the Left and nationalists, have found another issue to berate the administration about—the deployment of a US military contingent in Basilan—to add to their catalogue of grievances, including the poor economic and governance performance of her administration.

No doubt, the deployment of large numbers of troops and riot police at potential centers of mass action—Mendiola, Edsa, the Shrine—prevented the planned demonstrations from congregating at these staging points for large-scale demonstrations. The administration learned a costly lesson from the May 1 attack by the pro-Estrada mobs on Malacañang, and this time around, it didn't want to take a chance and nipped in the bud any effort by protesters to stage large demonstrations. The marchers could not get past the troop and police cordons.

While it cannot be discounted that the deployment of troops and the high-profile security measures warned protesters the government meant business and was ready to take tough measures to maintain order, that fact alone is not a sufficient explanation for the failure of the protest agitation to catch fire.

Weeks before the anniversary, coup rumors had intensified, large business organizations had joined the swelling chorus of voices bashing the President for her cold management style (lack of charisma) and perceived politicking in 2004. Estrada supporters had threatened marches similar to those that stormed the Palace on May 1. Retired generals, like Gen. Fortunato Abat, and even former President Ramos, were taking potshots at the President, and at that point, she did not know who were her friends or her enemies.

It appeared then another storm cloud was forming in the horizon, signaling People Power IV, and the roof was about to fall, but Jan. 20 came, and nothing catastrophic took place. That it did not happen was not the result of a miracle.

The reason is that, although the voices of discontent were sending ominous signals, there was in reality no constituency for a new people power movement and what is more important, there was no catalyst or flash point event that could spark a conflagration sending hordes of people to the streets. In 1986 and in 2001, there were catalysts or triggering events—in 1986, the hijacking by President Marcos of the snap elections; in 2001, the sealing of the second envelope by the Senate majority in the impeachment trial of Estrada, aborting the impeachment as a constitutional process and leaving the people no choice but to take their frustration to the streets.

In People Power I and II, there was a deployment of troops to control mass action, but this did not prevent the fall of two regimes, thus last week's security measures can hardly pass for an explanation. The lack of constituency for a new people power may be explained by the exhaustion of the people over street action as an instrument for change for the better.

Although the administration's one-year accomplishments can't be dismissed out of hand, they fall short of high expectations from the new government. President Macapagal has to do much more to prevent disenchantment from spreading, but she has not done dreadful things that could fuel mass unrest on the scale of People Power I and II, and so, the people appear disposed to give her a chance to show results in 2004, without having to join another people power movement.

The fatigue over people power and the danger of mobilizing at the drop of a hat to change a government that has not been given ample time to prove itself or get its programs under way is best reflected by two leading dynamos of People Power I and II—the Catholic Church, and even former President Ramos, who is partly critical of the Macapagal administration.

Cardinal Sin sent a signal he is discouraging another people power when he shut the Edsa Shrine as a stage for mass demonstration and had urged the faithful to give the government an environment of tranquility and stability from which economic recovery can be staged. While criticizing the President for what is perceived as politicking, Ramos, who was at the Edsa Shrine Mass last Sunday, not only dismissed prospects of a coup but also made a pitch for the rebuilding of strong institutions. Ramos said, "people power cannot again and again substitute for strong democratic institutions," and he is quite correct.

More and more leaders and groups are seeing the danger arising from the specter of a monster growing out of unbridled use of people power and of mass mobilization getting out of hand. People power can topple regimes but it is not a recipe for stability upon which economic growth can be built. In this respect, last Jan. 20 seems to be a turning point—moving us away from the precipice of mob rule. Democracy also needs a breathing spell from people power.

Three birds with one book purchase

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MANY thanks to everyone—friends, family, sisters in the movement, colleagues—who braved the traffic and concerns caused by the Luzon-wide outage to attend Monday's launch of the book "Nightmare Journeys: Filipina Sojourns through the World of Trafficking."

I am especially grateful for the presence of two groups of women. First, of some of the women whose stories are told in the book, accompanied by officers of the NGO's working with them. Truly, the book is as much theirs as it is mine, and I do hope they left the function feeling a sense of "ownership" toward the project. Conceived as an advocacy tool on the issue of trafficking, "Nightmare Journeys" will soon be translated into Filipino and, hopefully, into popular media such as radio and TV soaps. This way, the women's stories will resonate into the lives of countless other women who might otherwise have been tempted into getting entangled in the web of local and international traffickers.

A word of thanks, too, to Sr. Sol Perpinan and the young women from the Nazareth Growth Home who volunteered to sing three moving nationalist songs as a highlight of the simple program.

Second, the members and officers of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (Unifem) Philippine Committee. Before the start of the launch, Unifem held its regular membership meeting, with yours truly roped into the role of guest speaker.

* * *

BEFORE I spoke, Unifem president Erlinda E. Panlilio reported on the group's fund-raising activities. It was a pleasant surprise to hear that the Unifem Philippine Committee, the only one in a developing country that assists in raising money for women and development concerns worldwide, is outperforming committees in many wealthy countries. Its charter, though, requires it to remit most of its funds to the central office in New York. But when one of the guests raised the possibility of giving some of the proceeds from the sale of "Nightmare Journeys" to the women who told their stories, Panlilio said she would raise the possibility with the New York office.

So if you buy a copy of "Nightmare Journeys," which should go on sale soon at your favorite bookstores at P300 a copy, you'll be hitting not just two but three birds with one purchase. First, you'll help the Unifem Philippine Committee recover its publication costs and pursue its plans for public advocacy on the issue of trafficking. Second, through Unifem, you'll help raise funds for women's projects in the developing world. And last, you'll also be helping the brave women survivors pursue their dreams of leaving the world of sex work for good, and chart out a new life for themselves and their families.

Before I forget, I'd also like to acknowledge, with much gratitude, the presence of the INQUIRER's "big bosses" at the book launch. They are: board chair Marixi Rufino Prieto, president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, publisher Isagani Yambot and editor in chief Letty Jimenez Magsanoc. (An even greater honor was the fact that, as my daughter Miya noted, "Tita Letty arrived early!") Thank you again for the remarkable show of support!

* * *

EARLIER in the day, I guested on the show "Straight Talk," hosted by Cito Beltran on the ABS-CBN News Channel (ANC) every day from 12:30-1:30 p.m. With me was Ria Condelosano, president of Batis-Aware, an organization of women who had worked in Japan as entertainers and are now engaged in counseling; advocacy and income-generating projects. Also invited as guests were four women whose stories are told in the book where they are known as Bea, Nympha, Gina and Alicia.

Shot in silhouette, the four women provided anonymous, but nonetheless moving and compelling testimony on their experiences and escape from the world of traffickers. As the show wore on, it was obvious Cito was getting more and more agitated as his language became even more blunt, especially toward the traffickers, promoters and indifferent government officials.

About midway through the show, the lights suddenly went out—the Luzon-wide power outage had hit. "The devil doesn't want us to continue with the show!" Cito exclaimed. A few minutes later, the power went back on, and we had at least 10 more minutes to further explore the issue. Thanks, Cito, for caring so much and let's hope you harness that crusading spirit to go after the "devils" making billions from the trade of women and children.

* * *

FINALLY, I'd like to share with readers this note from Daphne Ceniza-Kuok, who is based in Hong Kong and sent the note "to encourage more government officials to be prudent with the people's money and the use of their time."

Some members of the House committee on labor were in Hong Kong recently "to make an appeal to Hong Kong authorities not to push through with the recent proposal to reduce the salary of foreign domestic helpers," Kuok writes. They were Representatives Roseller Barinaga, Satur Ocampo, Crisel Lagman Luistro and Loretta Ann Rosales.

"As we were making preparations for their arrival, I made inquiries on their accommodation and found that they will be staying in a small hotel in Kowloon called Shamrock. The hotel is so small it does not even have space for parking, one has to get off on a flea market nearby and walk to the hotel to access it. This was a surprise to me as I was expecting that they would opt for the fancier hotels.

"I went with them as they went shopping, meeting different groups and saw how diligent they have been in doing their work. They went around encouraging our *kababayans*, getting inputs from them which I thought is so different from the stories I've heard when government officials and legislators go on trips. They were conscious of how the people's money is being spent and how they used their time during the trip," recalls Kuok. So it is possible, after all, to enjoy the stature of a legislator without abusing the trust and generosity of taxpayers!

Santo Niño

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

A PUZZLED British monk once asked me about "St. Nino" who was honored by a proper liturgical feast on the third (in some places the last) Sunday of January in the Philippines. The monk, a specialist in saints and hagiography, spent the better part of the afternoon siesta in the monastery library going through all known reference works on saints and could not find any saint called Niño. There were no saints whose name even sounded remotely like Niño, leading the monk to wonder whether the Filipiño St. Niño was either obscure or recently canonized that he was not listed in any book. One cannot describe the sigh of relief on his face when I explained that there was no saint named Niño, and that Santo Niño in Spanish literally means "Holy Child." I then went into a short narrative on the Magellan expedition and the Santo Niño de Cebu, explaining how the cult developed such that we have a riot of niños in various shapes and sizes today.

In 1565, over four decades after Magellan was killed in the Battle of Mactan, Miguel Lopez de Legazpi entered Cebu and wrote a report that read in part:

"...One of the soldiers went into a large and well-built house of an Indian, where he found an image of the child Jesus (whose most holy name I pray may be universally worshipped). This was kept in its cradle, all gilded, just as it was brought from España; and only the little cross which is generally placed upon the globe in his hand was lacking. This image was well kept in that house, and many flowers were found before it, no one knows what object or purpose. The soldier bowed before it with all reverence and wonder, and brought the image to the place where the other soldiers were. I pray to the holy name of this image which we have found here, to help us and grant us victory, in order that these lost people who are ignorant of the precious and rich treasure which was in their possession may come to acknowledge him."

In 1566, an unsigned printed document on the Legazpi expedition came off the press in Barcelona that made this reference to the image:

"In a poorly built house was found an image of the Child Jesus, such as come from Flanders, with his veil and the globe in his hand, and in as good condition as if it were just made...They began construction of a fort, outside of which they erected a church, wherein the child Jesus was placed, and they called the church [Santissimo] Nombre de Jesus [Holy Name of Jesus]."

Based on the above and other contemporary documents, we all know the story of the Santo Niño de Cebu. Is the one venerated in Cebu today the same one found by Legazpi in 1565? Is it the same one presented by Magellan to the wife of Humabon in 1521? I checked the Skelton translation of the Pigafetta manuscript preserved in Yale University and promptly got confused. Relating the conversion of the king and queen of Cebu, Pigafetta wrote:

"After dinner our chaplain and some others...went on shore to baptize the queen. And she came with forty ladies and we led them on to the platform, then we caused her to sit on a cushion...until the priest was ready. Meanwhile we showed her a lady carved in wood, holding her child (which was very well made) and a cross. The sight of this gave her a greater wish to be a Christian, and asking for baptism, she was baptized, and named Joanna, like the emperor's mother...Then she begged us to give her that wooden image to put in place of her idols. Which we did."

Some days afterward, the queen attended Mass with her ladies. Pigafetta not only describes what she wore but related that Magellan sprinkled rose muscat water over them then, "The captain, knowing that the wooden image greatly pleased the queen, gave it to her saying that she should have it instead of her idols, for that it was the memorial and representation of the Son of God. And hearing this, the queen accepted it, and warmly thanked the captain for it."

From the above it seems that two images were given to the Cebuana queen—an image of the Madonna and child and that of the Santo Niño. However, before jumping into hasty conclusions I checked the other editions of Pigafetta—three of the four manuscript versions are in French and only one, the Ambrosian Codex, is in a mixture of Italian, Spanish and Venetian. The Ambrosian Codex is reputedly the most authoritative and says pretty much the same as the French version cited above except for the details. In the first instance, during the baptism of the queen, Pigafetta showed her three images, that of "Our Lady, a very beautiful wooden child Jesus, and a cross." The queen asked for the Santo Niño to keep in place of her idols but left empty-handed. A few days later the converted Queen Joanna came for Mass and as she was waiting, Magellan sprinkled her with rose water. Informed of the queen's wish to have the Santo Niño, he presented her with the image.

Historians try to reconstruct the whole picture of the past from fragments. While all documents point to a Santo Niño, there are some sources that say something else. Folk sources refer to the image originating from a pre-colonial firebrand, or how the image walks abroad when people are not looking. The challenge is trying to find objective truth in a maze of sources.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

GMA deserves better

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

THAT Philippines Forum 2002 of the leaders of the "successor generation" blew an ill wind that was somewhat disturbing. My reactions are second-hand. I wasn't there and I base my reactions on the comments of Amando Doronila, Rina Jimenez-David, Raul Concepcion and Florencio Abad.

The disenchantment over Ms Macapagal must have been pretty strong to warrant such a harsh verdict: "merely a manager," "not an inspiring leader," "lacking in EQ" (emotional quotient), "unable to communicate." Painful assessments all, and enough to move timid souls to tears and walk away, or to fight back and show the fangs.

From a distance and with some detachment, the disappointment seems to revolve around three words; charisma, manager and leadership.

Charisma is "a rare quality or power attributed to those who have demonstrated an exceptional ability for leadership and for securing the devotion of large masses of people."

A manager (take a deep breath) is one who plans, administers, directs, handles, controls, integrates an organization; familiar with all its parts and their interrelationship; good at human relations, conceptual ability, decision-making and "getting things done"; and is ultimately responsible for the organization.

Leadership is, well, leading—being in charge, in command and being the principal performer.

True charisma is rarer than we think. Mahatma Gandhi had it, Franklin Delano Roosevelt had it, and so did Ninoy Aquino. A little short on leadership, Magsaysay had it too. John F. Kennedy was said to have it.

But I won't grant charisma to Erap. Charm, which is the power to please, attract, fascinate and delight irresistibly, he had in abundance. However this does not flow from an interior quality but from his having been a movie star and from a people's fatal attraction for movie stars. Erap has charisma only in this loose sense in which we throw the word around. Even Ms Macapagal used this plastic charm in a cute farmer's outfit in her vice presidential campaign posters. The less we fall for such "charisma," the better.

I am surprised at Concepcion's regret that Ms Macapagal is only "a good manager." Isn't that what business wants? You see the type all around, you can "hate their guts," but as long as they deliver, they're great. Besides, managing is leading and many concede that Ms Macapagal has been driving herself in this aspect; except, laments the forum, that she does not inspire.

Ah, to inspire, to motivate, to "rally the people to move forward." It is for lack of inspiration that her critics fault her leadership. As rare as true charisma and perhaps a part of it, the ability to inspire is a tall order, a mark of greatness, both innate and acquired. I don't fault Ms Macapagal for not having it, yet.

So full are her hands, just managing a country so burdened with problems that such a precious intangible like inspiration has eluded her. Like the Light Brigade she is beleaguered on all fronts without let-up. The destabilization moves are very serious indeed, led by real "enemies of the state" who don't even bother to hide in the bushes. They are not just distractions to economic recovery but are equally grave. So is narco-politics, crime and corruption. So is the looming American military presence which is cloaked in ambiguity.

Ms Macapagal may be "cold and distant." I agree with David that she may be "unfeeling," just as I agree with Jim Paredes that some asses must be kicked. Human relations may not be Ms Macapagal's forte but good management requires it. She could be pretty curt; but eyeing 2004 isn't "terrible." It's natural, as long as she knows the limits. Anyone in her position would do the same thing.

What are we asking for? We are asking for a near-impossible combination: a charismatic and inspiring manager-leader. Given only one choice, I'd pick a manager. I'd even settle for improved human relations in the absence of "magic." Given more, I'd add a dash of charisma and inspiration. Is Lee Kuan Yu principally a manager or a charismatic leader? If Abad said, a "feeling leadership," I'd like that, too. But between his "emotional leadership" and one of strength and competence, I'd choose the latter.

For, precisely, one of our cultural ailments which keeps us benighted is too much emotional *awa* and *patawad*, too much emotional *hanga* over movie stars, basketball players, politicos oozing with charm. And how emotional we get over our rights! How contentious, how impossible to please we have become. We have enough perennial and professional protesters without everybody else aggravating this climate of discontent. There's too much push and pull—enough is fiscalizing; too much is rending. As Jaime Cardinal Sin writes, how tired we have all become.

We are part of the problem. Are we ungovernable? Or are we incapable of governing ourselves? What a deadly combination. Does Ms Macapagal's leadership look like zilch because we refuse to be supportive? Does she fail to unite because we insist on being fractious and fragmented? Pray tell, how can a leader inspire a people like this?

Asuncion David Maramba is a book editor, retired professor and occasional journalist.

* * *

Reactions welcome: marda@info.com.ph; fax 8210659

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ...?

Abadilla murder

COL. Rolando Abadilla, former Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group head during the Marcos regime, was shot dead inside his car while stuck in a traffic jam on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City on June 13, 1996 by at least four men. (PDI, 6/14/96)

Then Interior Secretary Robert Barbers formed "Task Force Rolly" to immediately solve the crime. The Alex Boncayao Brigade claimed responsibility for the crime, but the task force arrested other suspects. Presented to media on June 24 were Lenido Lumanog, owner of a security agency; Rameses de Jesus, Lumanog's "sidekick"; Cesar Fortuna, a policeman from Cebu who rented a room in Lumanog's house in Fairview; Augusto Santos, also from Fairview; and Joel de Jesus, a tricycle driver.

They were charged with murder at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 103. During the trial, the suspects said they were tortured to admit to the crime. The torture of one led to the identification of others.

A security guard who allegedly witnessed the crime positively identified the suspects as the ones responsible for the killing. Another security guard, however, said the accused were not the killers.

On May 27, 1999, the National Amnesty Commission released a resolution on the supposed plan by the ABB to kill Abadilla. This plan resulted in the mistaken killing of one Suseso de Dios outside the La Vista gate in Quezon City.

In a decision promulgated on Aug. 11, 1999, the court, citing the positive identification of a witness, found the accused guilty and sentenced them to death. They moved for reconsideration arguing the lack of proof beyond reasonable doubt and asked to be allowed to present new evidence. Running priest Fr. Robert Reyes offered to present as evidence a wristwatch, supposedly owned by Abadilla and handed over by a member of the ABB.

The court denied their motions on Jan. 26, 2000. The case was forwarded to the Supreme Court on Feb. 11, 2000 for automatic review.

On March 15, 2000, the convicts filed a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court to question their conviction and be allowed to present new evidence. It was denied in September 2001. The Supreme Court said the petition was improper since the subject orders "may be questioned only in the main case now on automatic review..." It added that it would not conduct hearings and receive evidence on the ABB angle "as it is not a trier of facts." The accused moved for reconsideration in October.

Case status: Upon request of the convicts, the DOJ investigation on their complaint of torture was reassigned by Secretary Hernando Perez from state prosecutor Marilyn Camponanes to state prosecutors Sebastian Caponong Jr. and Jose Dumangas and prosecution lawyer Clarissa Kuong.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court denied with finality the convicts' motion for reconsideration last November and ordered them to submit their respective briefs concerning the review of the sentence.

Armin P. Adina, PDI Research Department

Taruc was chief organizer of Hukbalahap

LETTERS

IT pains me to write this response to a letter in the INQUIRER last Jan. 11, signed by Jesus B. Lava, Casto J. Alejandrino and five others, titled "Rectifying a historical misconception." Their statement saying that "the Hukbalahap was founded by Luis M. Taruc is a frequently peddled misconception, if not a deliberate falsehood," compelled me to send this rejoinder, hoping you will give it the same space.

It was earlier in 1940, not 1941, when the Axis powers, led by Hitler, were overrunning Europe, and fascist Japan, under Tojo, had taken Formosa and Korea proceeding to Mongolia, Manchuria and China, that the Socialist Party of the Philippines headed by Pedro Abad Santos, the PKP headed by Crisanto Evangelista, the Frente Popular leaders, and AMT-KPMP leaders agreed to assign me as chief organizer of the Patriotic People's Army to be ready to resist the invaders through guerrilla warfare and continue the historical role of the KKK of Andres Bonifacio.

I was going from one barrio to another, town after town, province to province, in 1940 to 1941, when I was summoned to Manila on Dec. 17, 1941 to see Abad Santos for important matters related to my assignment. With me was Federico Maclang. Abad Santos told us that, in close coordination with other leaders of the umbrella organization, the United Front, we must endeavor to unify all anti-fascist, anti-Japanese fascist elements, and not project the communist party. We must help organize a broad national United Front against fascism and Japanese invasion.

I never claimed to be the sole founder of the Hukbalahap. I was only its chief organizer. Alejandrino and Lava do not know that, or pretend not to, because they were somewhere else busy with their own personal affairs. Why blame the media, who often saw me, while Lava and Alejandrino were not around to help me in the thankless task?

I was never active as a communist before, during and after World War II. I detested Stalinist "Bolshevism" as early as 1938, but for the sake of the United Front, I kept silent from 1940 to 1946, and resumed it only when Stalin resumed his evil ways. I was never a Stalinist communist like Lava and Alejandrino. I faithfully worked as a leader of the National Principles and Discipline of the National United Front. But Jose and Jesus Lava tried to usurp the role of the United Front by projecting the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) as the new national leadership.

The CPP under Jose and Jesus Lava, joined by Alejandrino after our release from Bilibid and Iwahig, was no longer the original PKP of Evangelista, Capadocia and Feleo, but a corrupted version led by Jose and Jesus, when their talented, truly Filipino nationalist and good communist Marxist Vicente Lava died. Vicente, before he died, even warned me and my brother Peregrino "not to be influenced by his too intellectually arrogant brothers, Jose and Jesus." "They will drag to destruction the United Front by their leftist adventurism," he predicted.

Faithfully following the principles and discipline of the United Front, we, in Central Luzon, won seven congressional seats in that April 1946 election. But Jose Lava undermined our coalition with the Nacionalista Party of Osmeña, and launched an all-communist ticket in that election in Manila, and failed.

In all gatherings of Huk veterans and sympathizers, when the toastmaster, or any comrades, called me "Supremo," I always correct them. For me, only God is Supreme. I prefer to be called Ka-Kabayan, Kapanalig, Kasama. But the media and many people insist on calling me Supremo, and those egotistic Stalinists envied me for it. *Bakit hindi sila*!

It was on March 26, 1942, when we inaugurated and agreed to call our people's army Hukbalahap, in Bawit, Nueva Ecija. For security reasons we transferred to Sitio Batibat in Concepcion, Tarlac the next day to elect the commander in chief. Jesus Lava was not yet with us. I was elected unanimously. On my request, Alejandrino was elected as my vice commander in chief.

So, March 29 is a deliberate misstatement of the true date of our Huk inauguration. The Torres couple, Felisa A. Cuyugan and Ben Feleo, were not there either.

Their claim that "the only entity, the only force that integrated the guerrilla squadrons" was another deliberate lie of these frustrated, ambitious Stalinist loyalists. I pity them for their bloated egos.

Lava, Alejandrino and company have consistently refused my sincere appeal for us to equally share the mistakes committed by our fractured leadership, forgive each other and work again together for true nationalism, and democracy and not insist on projecting their being communists, using democracy as a bait, to deceive and win over followers of the CPP. We must continue Jose Rizal, Andres Bonifacio and Apolinario Mabini's example, sincerely and passionately.—**LUIS M. TARUC, chair emeritus and commander in chief, Hukbalahap 1942-1945**

Land reform from the view of landowner's heir

THE SPECIAL Report section (PDI, 12/30/01, P. 12) carried this news item: "DAR's target for land reform attainable despite budget cut." With the budget cut, I wonder how the government will pay the landowners whose pieces of property have been distributed to farmworkers who were given certificates of land ownership awards (CLOAs)?

My father, who has 13 children, left us with over 137 hectares of hard-earned coconut land. The government, over the years, unilaterally cancelled our titles and distributed the land to the farmworkers and their families. The law requires that the land be given to farmworkers who will till the land. In our case, some of the farmworkers' children no longer live in the vicinity of the coconut lands and do not till the lands but are still beneficiaries, while the landowners' children are not given retention areas at all. One awardee is not even a farmworker and "qualified" only because she is the alleged mistress of the Barangay Agrarian Reform Committee (BARC) chair.

The law requires that every harvest season, farmworkers pay the government their annual amortization for the awarded land. They have been instructed to stop submitting our share of the harvests, which they have been doing for about three years now. Since the government has not made any payment to us, this only means that the farmworkers are paying the government with our rightful share of the harvests and for land that the government took from us! Our family, I'm sure, does not have a monopoly of this injustice!

The law requires that the landowner be paid only 30 percent in cash and the rest in bonds redeemable annually for a period of 10 years. To effect this payment, the landowner has to submit numerous requirements that inevitably end up entwined in bureaucratic red tape for several years. In our case, the Department of Agrarian Reform has particularly made the process more cumbersome. Although our land is in Camarines Sur, the Land Bank branch processing our papers is in Legazpi City, Albay, even as the law provides that an "accessible bank" must make the processing. Since we are based in Quezon province and Manila, it is difficult and expensive to follow up our papers.

We are not against land reform. We are against the manner in which it is being implemented. If payment to the landowners cannot be made due to the many requirements, the farmworkers must still give the landowners their rightful share. For how else can the landowners and their families meet the expenses incurred in the transfer of the pieces of property? Justice is no one's monopoly. Even those who own land, stereotypically labeled as rich, are entitled to it.

Everything said, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program and the government's style of implementation have definitely achieved one thing: they have reduced us all to debtors. The government owes the landowners, the farmworkers owe the government, and the government owes foreign banks and other lending institutions to fund land reform. It is no wonder then that the CARP's objectives of improving the quality of the farmworkers' lives and greater productivity of agricultural land face imminent failure.—**DALISAY SY, 35 Speaker Perez St., Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City**

Pit bull of the opposition

WHILE I can understand the tiresome posturings of opposition senators (after all, they are an aging group of assorted comedians who are scared to become irrelevant and would therefore do everything, say anything and accuse anyone to get media space), I can't say the same about the actions of my idol Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Having risen to the height of public adulation for his heroic performance during the impeachment trial (who could forget his teary-eyed, conditional resignation after Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. made that terse declaration: "The nays have it!") and his historic role as the microphone-holder during the oathtaking of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at the Edsa Shrine, he has sunk so low by acting as the pit bull of the opposition. During the holidays, he was very confident of toppling Senate President Franklin Drilon and getting back his old post as Senate chief. In various meetings with the media, he said the minority had won over a couple of disgruntled administration senators, ensuring a shift of power in the Senate.

But after this cocky prediction was proven false, he turned around and blamed the media for playing up the Senate coup story "maybe for lack of material to write during the holidays." But the media gave him the space because they thought he was credible when he made those declarations.

There's an obvious lesson here: if the opposition can't take their role as principled fiscalizers seriously, they should not be taken seriously. I believe this is the only way we can move this country forward. *Tama na ang paporma! Sobra na ang komedya! Magtrabaho na kayo ng seryoso sa Senado!*

What about Pimentel? From his actions, many would conclude that hell hath no fury like the one who was not appointed vice president. But I'm still hoping and praying that he will find his way back to his true calling as the people's champion.—**ED DAMES, 25th Floor, The Enterprise Center Tower 2, 6766 Ayala Ave., Makati City**

Warlords jeopardize Afghan reconstruction

NEWS ANALYSIS

Stephen Coates

ISLAMABAD—Reports of fighting Monday between rival warlords in Afghanistan's north could not have come at a worse time for interim leader Hamid Karzai as he tries to muster international aid to rebuild his shattered nation.

The Afghan Islamic Press said the militia forces of ethnic Uzbek chief Abdul Rashid Dostam and a rival ethnic Tajik commander, probably Mohammad Daoud, had been fighting since Sunday over a remote district near the Tajikistan border.

While the report has not been independently confirmed, it highlights the precarious peace that exists between Afghanistan's tribal chiefs and warlords as they compete to fill the power vacuum left by the defeated Taliban.

The report is also likely to be noted with concern in Tokyo, where Karzai on Monday addressed delegates from more than 50 donor countries at a conference on the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Almost $4 billion was pledged over the next five years, with the final figure for 2002 alone looking set to match or beat the $1.3 billion needed to cover immediate costs.

"But the true test, of course, is...whether we will make good on those pledges, whether we provide the aid that is desperately needed right now, and whether we stay engaged for the long haul," warned UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who is attending the two-day meeting.

The key to turning the pledges into hard cash will be maintaining the peace in Afghanistan so the massive task of rebuilding the country after more than 20 years of war can begin, analysts said.

"Unless the Afghans can unify, the international community will not move on the reconstruction front," said Islamabad-based analyst Rifaat Hussain, chair of Quaid-i-Azam University's department of defense and strategic studies.

"If there is continued fighting then the international community will just walk," he said, adding that he supported Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's repeated calls for a stronger foreign security force in Afghanistan.

Dostam and Daoud are both members of rival factions of the Northern Alliance which dominates Karzai's government. It is hoped the UN-backed administration with a six-month mandate will be followed by a broad-based, multi-ethnic government.

Uzbek warlord Dostam, who controls the main northern town of Mazar-i-Sharif, was made deputy defense minister in Karzai's administration only after he protested bitterly about being left out of the inter-Afghan talks in Bonn which decided on the make-up of the interim cabinet.

Elsewhere around the country, other warlords have also expressed dissent and are ruling their respective territories regardless of the new central authority in Kabul.

Ismail Khan controls the western city of Herat, Haji Abdul Qadir has the eastern city of Jalalabad and Gul Agha is in charge of the Taliban's former stronghold of Kandahar in the south. The extent of Karzai's influence in these major cities is unclear at best.

Analysts point out that the situation in Afghanistan is now similar to the post-Soviet era in the early 1990s, when "warlordism" held the country hostage and the power of the government in Kabul was severely limited.

"The problem that everyone has talked about but which has been pushed into the background is the problem of warlordism," said Hussain.

"After the Taliban fell from power most of the areas under their control did in fact return to some form of warlordism.

"If you deal with these guys with a soft touch they could cause a lot of problems in the future."

AFP

Nice Naia story

A COP and a guard at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport were cited recently for their honesty. Policeman Rolando Lim and security guard Ian Canencia reportedly returned a bag containing money and valuables worth P5 million which its owner, Fil-Canadian Marie Beth Caoile, inadvertently left on her trolley. Considering the difficult times, these men could have easily been tempted to pocket what they found. After all, it just fell on their laps, so to speak. However, good sense and honesty, prevailed. Commendable indeed. And this is not the first time we've heard of such display of honesty at the Naia.

I myself would like to cite another airport employee, a certain Fedencio Alinsub who I suppose is a porter at the Naia-I (he was wearing a barong and had an ID). I arrived from the United States on the evening of Jan. 10. Since one of my luggage was so big and heavy that I could hardly lift it, I needed assistance. I asked for assistance from Mr. Alinsub who at that time was busy moving some unattended luggage aside to give way to passengers who had already retrieved theirs. Without any hesitation he helped me put my luggage on my trolley. I pulled out a $5 bill to give to him as tip, but he refused. I told him he deserved it for helping me. Still he refused. So I peeked at his ID to get his name. Somehow I hope that by publishing this letter I could repay him for that very simple good deed which, when actually multiplied by the number of porters in our airports, would easily translate to a lot of goodwill and good words for our airport personnel. May others emulate him.

How many times have we heard that our airport personnel are "*mukhang pera*" and are easily bribed, especially those at the Customs? I was a Saudi overseas Filipino worker for 17 years and not even once did I have to shell out a dollar or two for any of the guys at the airport. I have always believed in the integrity and honesty of our airport personnel that I never deemed it necessary to have some loose dollars on hand upon arrival at the Naia.—**RHOEL R. MENDOZA, 903 San Jose cor. Amarillo, 1550 Mandaluyong City**

People power is a continuing struggle

IN DISMISSING the need for another people power, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin eventually discarded the possibility of leading it to the right direction, a direction which he correctly identified. In his statement published in several newspapers last week, the cardinal said the essence of people power must be focused on two neglected sectors of our society—the poor and the youth.

For us, the three people power events were products of the people's continuing struggle for social change. They are now history, but we believe people power is a continuing process. It is a moving spirit. So if for Sin, Edsa I and II were revolutions "for the return to morality in the conduct of public office," which is yet to be realized, then why close the door for the next episode if that could lead the way to genuine social transformation?

Edsa Tres, according also to the good cardinal, was the voice of the neglected and marginalized poor. We totally agree. They may have been duped and used by some powerbrokers but they came to Edsa mainly to show that they had been neglected.

Sin was correct in pointing out that the current political situation is far from ideal, that it needs a lot of improvement, that politics is indeed dirty, that the poor remain neglected. But he simply puts the blame to "all ourselves," which for us, is the simplistic way of complaining against the complexities of social contradictions and realities in this country. He failed to realize that this was, indeed, the real essence of people power that was taken away from the masses.

Monsignor Coronel of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines was more correct in saying that the true form of people power "is yet to surface." Yes, it has yet to surface. And for us, the dream of "giving Edsa to the poor" is to dream of another people power.

This is because if there's anybody who's making a mockery and abuse of people power, it is the *trapos* and the elite class of our society. They hijacked the essence of the three Edsas and denied the masses the benefits of people power.

Sin complains that he still needs to see concrete programs to improve houses for the poor, quality education for the youth and job opportunities for the bigger sector of our society. Well, unfortunately, that may never come under the Macapagal administration. Nothing so far has changed in terms of policies. And that can concretely be seen in the allocation of our national budget.

In our 2002 budget of P780.8 billion, P365 billion will merely go to the International Monetary Fund-World Bank and the pork barrel.

We should therefore not be surprised when poor people in communities cynically cry, "*Walang Gloria ang bukas namin.*" Why should we even be surprised if someday they stage their own version of a genuine people power? I would rather encourage them.—**WILSON FORTALEZA, president, Sanlakas, 92 Masikap St., Diliman, Quezon City**

Toll hike unjustified

I AM a real estate agent who has been in the business for the last 10 years, selling pieces of property located at the north and south of Metro Manila. My job requires me to travel to these areas and use frequently both the North Expressway and South Expressway, the Skyway included. The recent toll increase, the protests against it, the suspension of the increases (except Skyway) by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and other related issues have prompted me to air my views.

To the PNCC, its operators and maintainers of the North Expressway: I don't see any justification for a toll hike in the North Expressway. The traffic is terrible, and that is an understatement. Most of the toll booths and the areas around them are dirty. The road condition is more volatile than the stock exchange: it can be good at one point and really bad at another. Security is lax, with pedestrians and even livestock sometimes crossing the highway and endangering travelers.

To the PNCC, Philippine Skyway Corp., operators and maintainers of the SLEX and Skyway: The Skyway itself and the rehabilitation of the South Expressway are an improvement. Unfortunately, the project has stopped. Where is the Skyway from Bicutan to Alabang? The bottleneck at the Bicutan off-ramp is terrible, and so with almost all the tollgates. What happened to the E-Pass System? Maybe it would be better if you gave the E-Pass tags away to frequent South Expressway and Skyway users as a form of subsidy. This might even allow you to open more E-Pass dedicated lanes to ease traffic at the tollgates. And the E-Pass reloading? I suggest you make it more convenient and accessible for us.

To the government and concerned government agencies: We have laws, rules and procedures covering these issues. I hope you will implement them fairly, justly and without political considerations. Secondly, can you do something about the completion of the Skyway? Its present state is starting to be a cause of traffic congestion. Thirdly, PNCC officials are clearly making more popular decisions over logical and correct ones. Why are they hanging on to their jobs?

To those opposed to the hike: To be fair to the PNCC and PSC, there has been a notable improvement in the South Expressway, aside from the addition of the Skyway. We all know that for a fact, whether we admit it or not. I wish I could say the same for the North Expressway. But if we do have grievances, let us use the proper channels and procedures to air them. Recent developments are starting to look dirty since politics is getting in the way.—**VERONICA SAMONTE, 1563 Pasaje Rosario St., Pedro Gill, Manila**

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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Afghan aid pledges reach $4.5B

TOKYO—World leaders Tuesday pledged $4.5 billion to help Afghanistan rise out of the ruins of war, drawing praise from the month-old Afghan leadership working to end the misery of their people.

"We are happy with the result of the conference we had yesterday and today," interim leader Hamid Karzai told the Japan National Press Club, shortly after the two-day Afghan donors' conference ended here.

"I also hope the pledges are made true in the coming days so we can take the process of reconstruction forward," he said.

Donors have promised to deliver $1.8 billion this year to meet Afghanistan's immediate needs, and in a tangible sign that money was beginning to reach the bankrupt administration the first wages were being handed over to civil servants in Kabul who have not been paid in seven months

The recent history of Afghanistan was "an endless list of misery for Afghans, in which Afghan people were the first victims of terrorism." said Karzai.

But now Afghanistan must look to the future. "From now, till five months, we need to lay the foundation politically and economically for the Afghan people to lead a normal life . . . We are almost beginning from scratch," he said.

International leaders echoed Afghan praise that the amount of $4.5 billion pledged over five years exceeded all expectations—even though initial estimates by the World Bank and other lending agencies has put the cost of Afghanistan's reconstruction over the next decade at $15 billion.

"All of this comes to us as a surprise," Torek Faradi, economic adviser to the Afghan government, said.

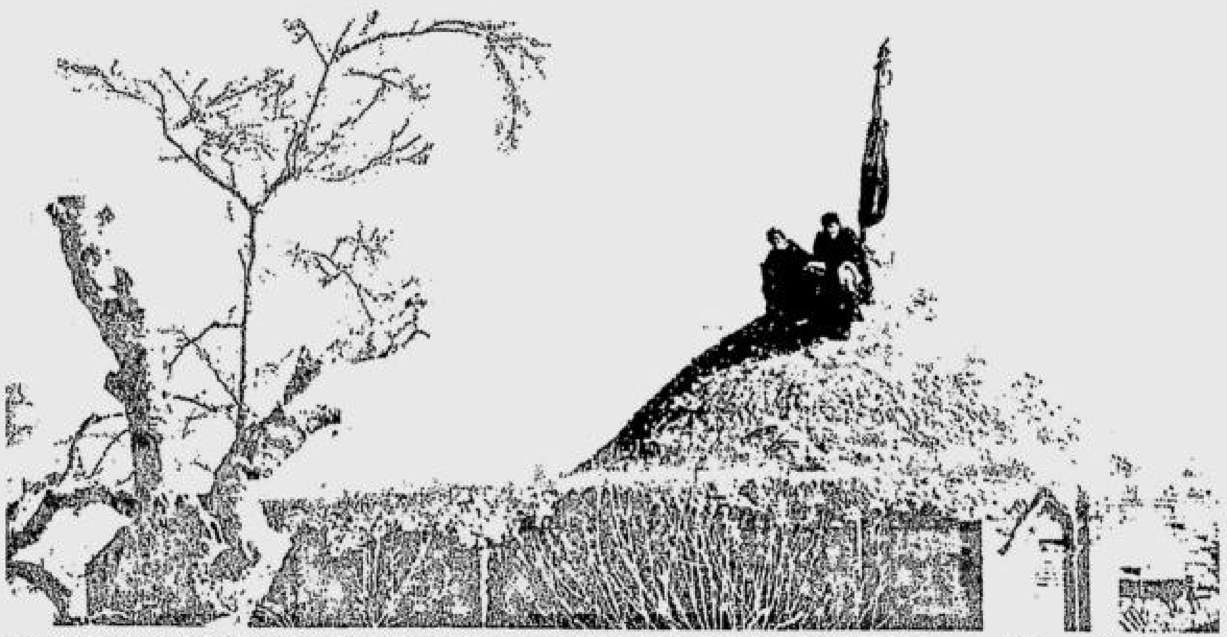
"We never thought that some day in Tokyo so many countries would pledge such a figure. It's unprecedented."

But he acknowledged concerns about the distribution of the money, amid continued lawlessness and a lack of security on the ground since the ousting of the hardline Taliban militia last month.

"We are fully conscious that if a mistake is made, we might lose our donor public's trust," he said.

A conference statement set out several priorities for rebuilding Afghanistan after two decades of Soviet occupation, war, famine and five years of Taliban misrule.

Topping the list were improving governance in a country infamous for its lawlessness, and restoring education—especially for women, whom the Taliban treated as second-class citizens. *AFP*



TWO AFGHAN boys sit at the top of a mosque as they guard the village of Kalackan, some 40 km north of Kabul on Jan. 21. Kalackan, a former frontline during the Afghan civil war, was completely destroyed in the last six years. Big donor countries on Monday pledged more than $4.5 billion to rebuild Afghanistan and eradicate the harsh conditions that bred the al-Qaida network.

REUTERS

US assailed over treatment of al-Qaida, Taliban prisoners

WASHINGTON—As maneuvers began to test the legal status of al-Qaida and Taliban suspects held by the US military at the naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the United States faced international pressure Monday over the prisoners' treatment.

The arrival of 14 more prisoners at the US-controlled base in southeastern Cuba on Monday brought the total number of detainees transferred from Afghanistan to 158, a US military official said.

Tom Crosson, a spokesperson for the US Southern Command in Miami, said a Muslim Navy officer and cleric would be brought to the base "sometime this week" to attend to the prisoners' needs.

Meanwhile, a federal judge in Los Angeles agreed to consider a petition presented by a coalition of civil rights advocates on behalf of 110 of the detainees.

Judge Howard Matz will consider whether the prisoners from the war in Afghanistan are being held in violation of the US Constitution and the Geneva Convention, according to a Monday Los Angeles Times article.

A hearing is scheduled for Tuesday. The Times said the petition raises some unusual legal questions, including the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles district court, geographically distant from the Cuban base.

The court would also have to decide whether the suspects had been fighting for a government or a terrorist organization.

Crosson said US captives at the base were being well treated, after photographs in British newspapers showing a group of kneeling, handcuffed prisoners wearing dark goggles, ear muffs, mittens and bright orange jumpsuits brought strong criticism. *AFP*

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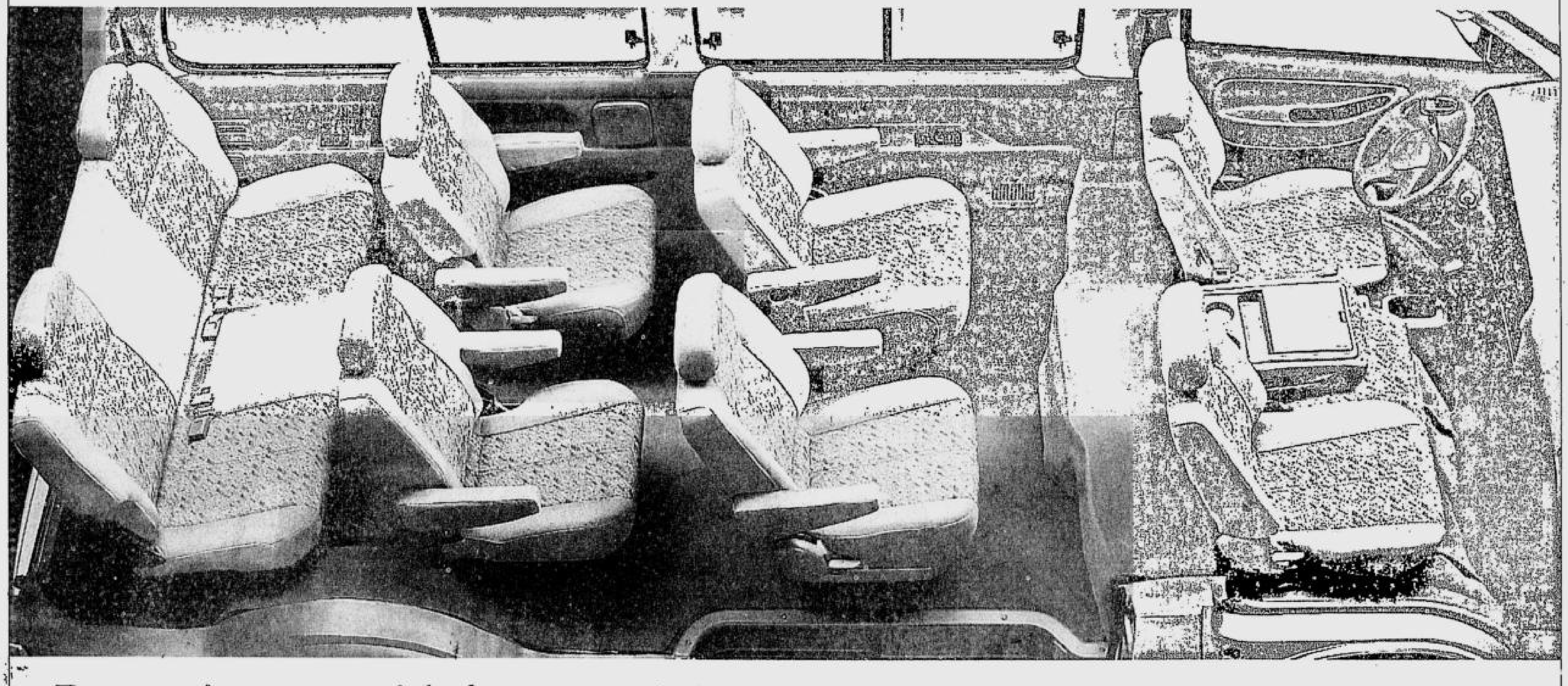

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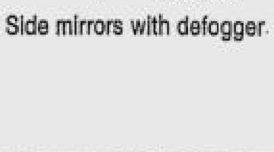
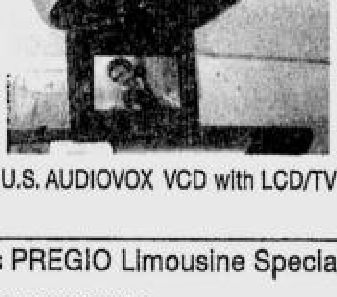


Side mirrors with defogger



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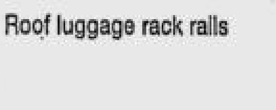

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Gunmen hit US center in Calcutta, kill 4 cops

CALCUTTA—Four unidentified gunmen yesterday sprayed bullets outside the American Center in the eastern Indian city of Calcutta, killing four armed police guards and injuring 20 people.

Police said four men on two motorcycles drove up to the American Center, which is located on one of Calcutta's main throughfares, Nehru Road, and started firing indiscriminately.

Indian Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha condemned the attack, which came little more than a month after an assault on the Indian parliament, as an act of "rogue terrorism."

The parliament attack, which New Delhi blamed on Pakistan-based militants, triggered a sharp escalation in military tensions between India and Pakistan, who have since deployed an estimated 800,000 troops on their common border.

Police said four police guards outside the Calcutta Center were killed on the spot and 18 others injured, along with a civilian and a private security guard.

Calcutta police chief Sujoy Chakraborty said the gunmen had escaped.

"This was definitely an attack on the American Center by terrorists of some group or the other," Chakraborty said.

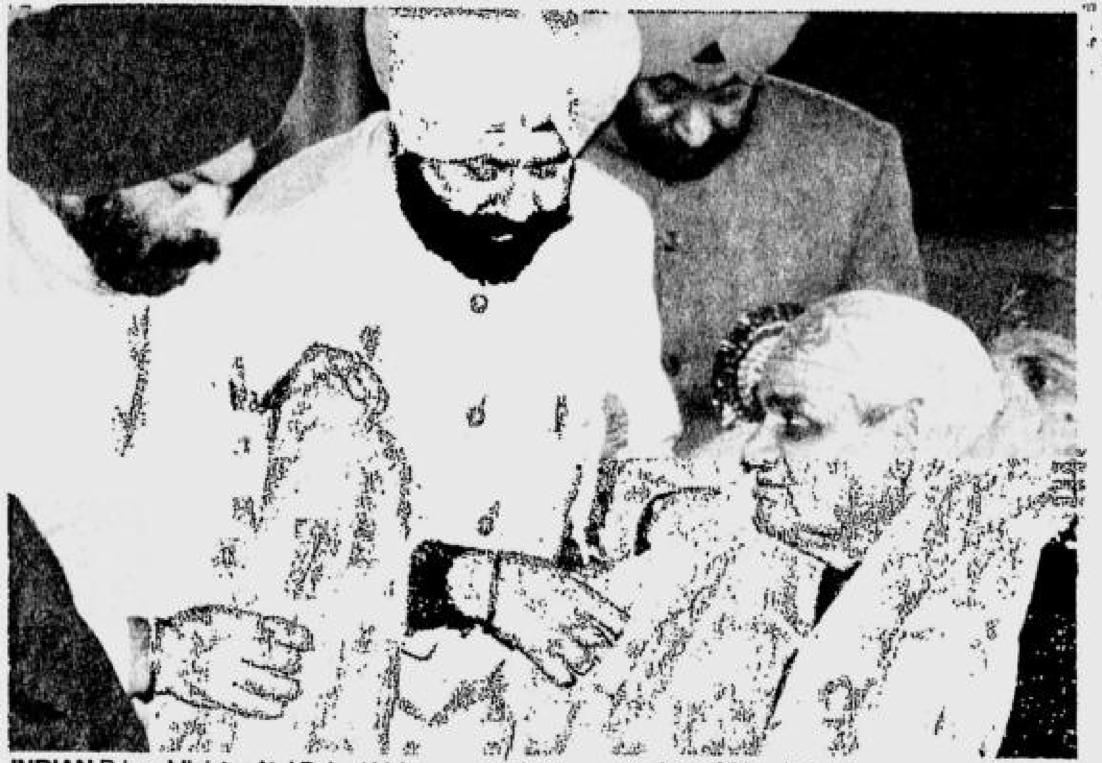
The building, which is several kilometers from the US Consulate in Calcutta, houses a library, press and commercial office, and is staffed by mainly Indian nationals and a handful of American diplomats.

"There were no American citizens injured and there were no US Consulate staff in the Center at the time of the incident," said Gordon Duguid, chief information officer at the US Embassy in New Delhi.

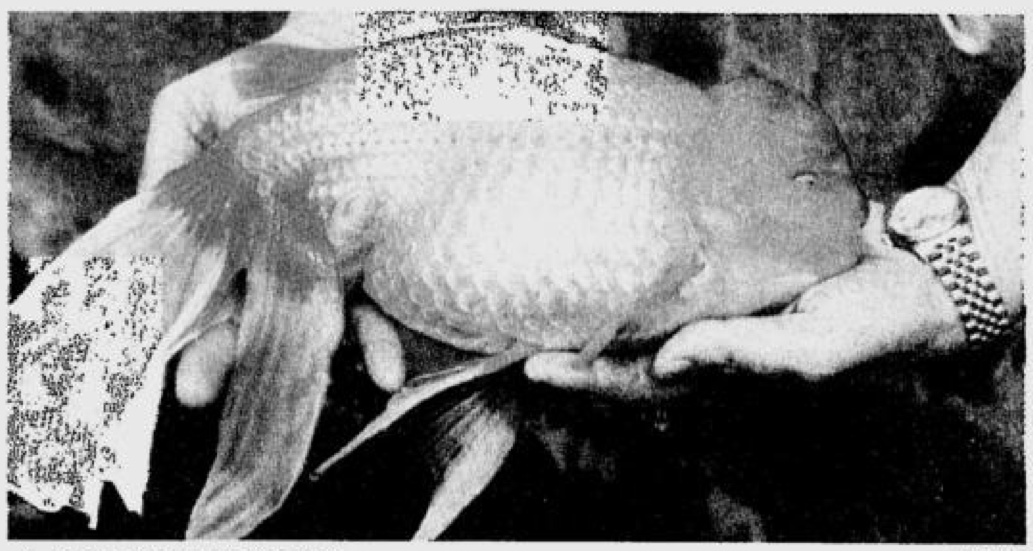
"No one has claimed responsibility for the incident," Duguid said, adding that the Calcutta consulate was in close touch with local police.

The Star television news channel said an anonymous caller to a newspaper office in Calcutta had claimed responsibility for an Islamic militant group fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, the Harkat-ul-Jihad Islami.

"We hope that the investigation proceeds quickly," Duguid said, stressing that all US diplomatic offices in India, with the exception of Center in Calcutta, were open. *AFP*



INDIAN Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee receives scarves from Sikhs during the commemoration of the birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh at the Gurdwara Rakabganj in New Delhi, Jan. 21. REUTERS



A FISH CALLED BRUCE REUTERS

A giant goldfish named Bruce, a Red Oranda measuring 37.2 cm (15 inches), is lifted from the water at a fish farm in the southern Chinese city of Dongguan Jan. 18. Two Hong Kong fish breeders are angling for a place in the Guinness Book of Records with the giant goldfish the size of an average housecat.

Enron CEO justifies sale of stock before bankruptcy

WASHINGTON—Bankrupt energy giant Enron's chair Ken Lay sold stock in the company prior to its filing for bankruptcy protection because he needed cash, not because he wanted to bail out, his lawyer told The New York Times Monday.

Lawyer Earl Silbert told the daily in a telephone interview that Lay had sold his shares at least 15 times in 2001 in order to repay $4 million of loans.

Every time he would repay the loan, the daily said, he would borrow more to repay money owed on other investments.

The acknowledgment "has fueled concern that (Lay) was exiting his position as he was encouraging others to buy," the Times wrote.

According to the daily, in early 2001 Lay sold shares "on every business day" making a profit of $21 million. He stopped selling in July when the value of the stock fell to half its value.

"The reason he stopped selling was that he thought the stock was going to go up," Enron lawyer Robert Bennett said earlier this month, the Times reported.

On Sept. 26 Lay used an Internet chat forum to encourage Enron employees to buy shares as the stock was "an incredible bargain," adding that the stock value would increase 800 percent in the next decade, the Times wrote.

Enron filed for bankruptcy on Dec. 2—the biggest corporate failure in US history. Many Enron employees saw their life savings—wrapped up in the company's shares—wiped out in the crash.

The energy group revealed large losses in October and the next month admitted it had overstated earnings by nearly $600 million since 1997.

It also overstated its equity base by $1.2 billion.

Enron reportedly paid $55 million in retention bonuses to top managers and executives just before it filed for bankruptcy protection and laid off 4,000 workers. *AFP*

Comoros president resigns

MORONI—Comoros President Azali Assoumani resigned as head of the Indian Ocean state on Monday, amid a breakup of the national unity government only a day after it was formed.

Azali, who seized power in a coup in 1999, had announced last week that he would resign to concentrate on the presidential elections, set for April.

The Comoros, an archipelago in the Indian Ocean off the southeast coast of Africa, has suffered chronic instability and repeated coups since three of the four islands voted for independence from France in 1974 and formed an Islamic republic.

Prime Minister Hamada Madi Bolero will serve as interim president, according to a presidential statement read out on national radio.

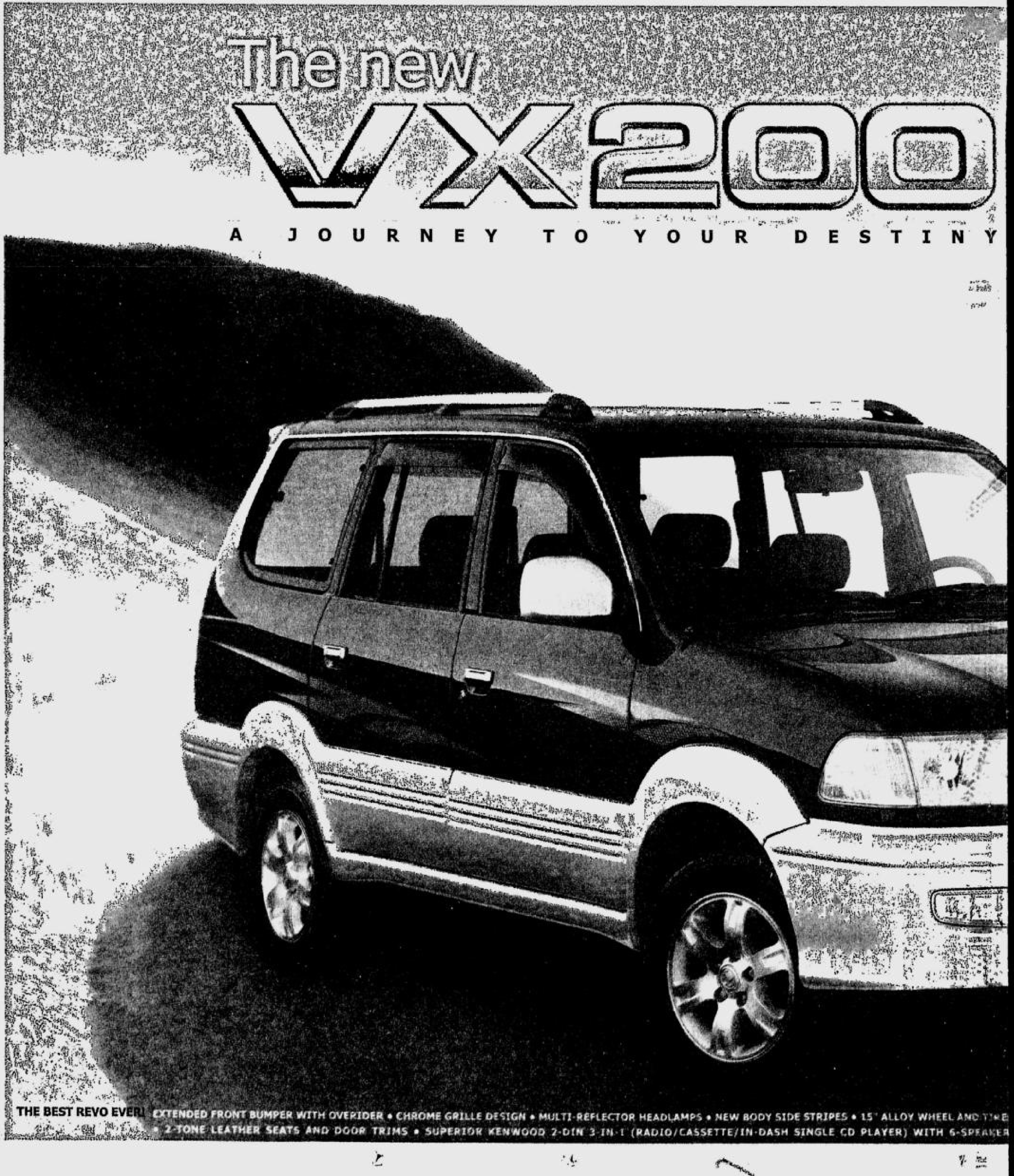
Six opposition Cabinet ministers had resigned over portfolio grievances earlier in the day, sparking the collapse of the government.

The ministers issued a statement accusing Azali of unilaterally announcing the Cabinet, and voicing disappointment about not being offered the posts of prime minister, and ministers of finance and foreign affairs.

Hamada's transition Cabinet had been expected to govern until the April 14 elections.

"The formation of the government did not respect the spirit or the letter of what had been agreed on with the international community," opposition spokesperson Ali Msaidie Houmed said.

The unity government had been made up of signatories to a national reconciliation agreement inked in February by federal authorities in the capital Moroni, and opposition members and separatists on Anjouan, one of three islands making up the archipelago. *AFP*



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Israel forces reoccupy Palestinian town

TULKAREM, West Bank—Israeli forces swarmed into a Palestinian town Monday sparking deadly gunfights in the first full re-occupation of a town since self-rule began, as the UN and Russia warned against the escalating violence.

Troops swept houses in Tulkarem for suspected militants, rounding up at least 20 people including three members of the radical Islamic group Hamas, after Washington also cautioned that the situation was "very dangerous."

A 19-year-old Palestinian was shot dead while another man aged 42 was pronounced clinically dead after being hit by Israeli bullets in the Tulkarem refugee camp.

And in Ramallah, where Israeli forces have taken up positions in front of Yasser Arafat's offices and across the West Bank town, two members of the Palestinian security forces were shot and fatally wounded in clashes with the invading forces.

Both the United Nations and Russia expressed growing alarm over the situation in the Middle East, with Russia warning of "dire consequences" for the people in the region should the violence worsen.

Israeli troops occupied buildings in Tulkarem, which the Army said was used as a springboard for bloody attacks in Israel, just across the Green Line.

Col. Yair Golan told Israeli Army radio the forces were not there to stay but "we will remain here as long as we feel we have to carry out preventative operations."

US Secretary of State Colin Powell said late Sunday the situation was "very dangerous" after a shooting attack last week by a Palestinian radical group that killed six Israelis in the town of Hadera, just 20 km from Tulkarem.

The Palestinian Authority in protest at the incursions called for an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council.

Arafat, meanwhile, remained defiant, saying he was ready for "martyrdom" for the Palestinian cause and brushed off the deployment of Israeli tanks just 70 meters from his building.

But he was snubbed by visiting former US President Bill Clinton, who lunched with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon but avoided Ramallah, saying Arafat had missed a "golden opportunity" for peace when he was still in the White House.

Sharon warned that Israel would react "radically and totally differently than it has done so far" if the Palestinians escalated the conflict by firing rockets at Israeli territory from the West Bank.

"We have conveyed this warning to the United States for them to communicate it to the Palestinian Authority," he said, according to parliamentary sources.

On the ground, Israeli troops in Tulkarem took over the house of mayor Mahmud al-Jelad and the local offices of the Palestinian legislative council, the Palestinians' acting parliament.

The troops imposed a curfew on the town and told residents through loudspeakers to stay indoors. Intense gunbattles rocked the town as Israel locked it down. *AFP*

A PALESTINIAN gunman fires his machine gun at an Israeli tank position in the West Bank city of Ramallah Jan. 21. Israeli troops and dozens of tanks, guarded by helicopters, rumbled into the Palestinian-ruled city of Tulkarm in a predawn raid on Monday, Palestinian witnesses and security sources said. REUTERS

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Russia's independent TV network closes

MOSCOW—The embattled TV-6, the last major independent television network in Russia, stopped broadcasting at midnight Tuesday after the press and media ministry suspended its broadcasting license.

The ministry had ordered the Moscow Independent Broadcasting Corporation (MNVK), which held the license, to stop broadcasting as the liquidation order came into force, officials said.

TV-6 reporters and other prominent journalists protested the decision, which threatens to replace one of Russia's major television channels with a blank screen, in an on-air conference in the Moscow Echo radio station.

"This makes me sick. I don't know if one can force a blank screen on a television channel, but the very idea that someone would want to do that is simply foul," prominent journalist Vladimir Pozner fumed.

"I think that this is a unique incident, when a whole channel stops broadcasting. This violates the rights of their audiences, and this black hole is actually a hole in our democratic practice," complained Yasen Zasursky, dean of the journalism college in Moscow's State University.

However, rights activist Alexei Simonov suggested that the authorities would try to avoid having a blank screen in place of the TV-6, but would attempt to tie the outspoken reporters down.

"They will merely try to hang a few swords above their heads and make the team feel completely defenseless, so that they begin to do stupid things," Simonov told the Moscow Echo radio. *AFP*

Congo volcano ignites blast

GOMA, Democratic Republic of Congo—A petrol depot swamped in molten lava exploded in Goma Monday, leaving as many as 100 people dead in a city left in ruins after a volcano eruption last week.

Looters were siphoning fuel when the station ignited, belching a ball of fire and thick black smoke into the sky over Goma, where rivers of lava have gushed through the city since Thursday's eruption of Mt. Nyirangongo.

"There was a group there who took a wrong step. Many of them died," said Azarias Ruberwa, a spokesperson for Congolese rebels who control the region. He said between 60 and 100 people were killed.

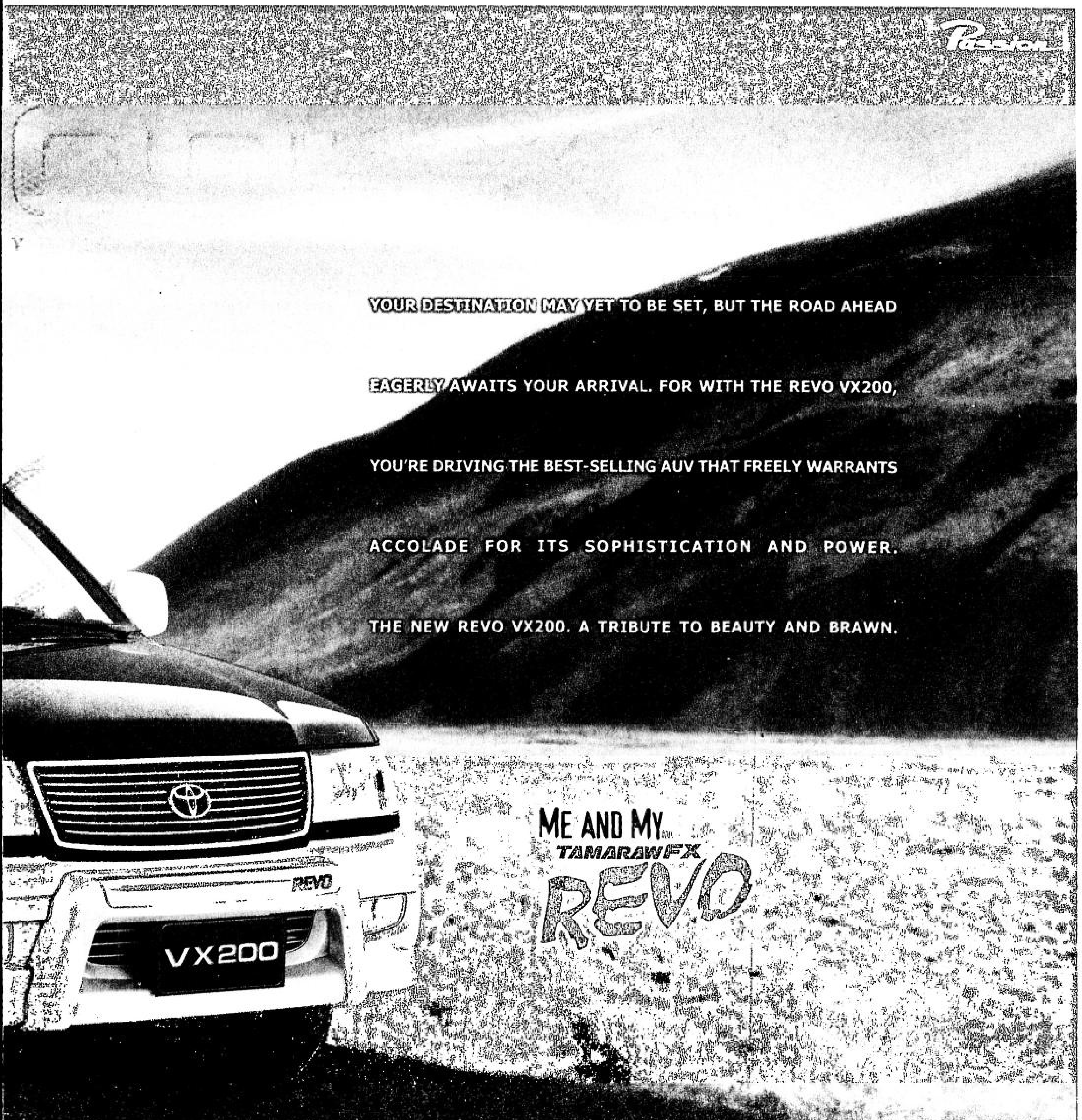
He said the casualties were the first confirmed deaths resulting directly from the eruption of Mt. Nyirangongo, which sent hundreds of thousands of people fleeing into neighboring Rwanda.

Hospital sources said another 10 people had been killed and nearly 400 were being treated at hospitals in Goma and in the Rwandan town of Gisenyi, while other unconfirmed reports have spoken of a death toll of around 40.

The tragedy unfolded as residents kept returning to the city in search of food and water despite warnings from aid agencies that Goma was not yet safe.

An AFP reporter said further tremors were still shaking the region on Monday night although a volcano expert said the risk of more eruptions from Nyirangongo was minimal.

"The current phase of the active eruption is finished. The volcano is quiet," said Jacques Durieux, a volcanologist working with the United Nations. *AFP*



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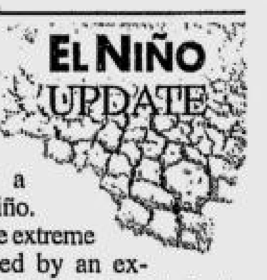
NIA issues warning on new El Niño

BAGUIO CITY—Four years after the drought caused by the El Niño phenomenon, the National Irrigation Administration has started encouraging farmers to implement crop diversification in preparation for the long dry months predicted this year.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration made the prediction on El Niño in December after observing the abnormal weather condition last year.

The NIA admitted that its water reserve is not enough to irrigate farms in remote areas of the Cordillera when El Niño strikes.

Joseph Rios, chief of Pagasa-Baguio, said the agency has monitored an increase of "positive 1 degrees Celsius" above the normal temperature last year. He said this was among the indicators of a coming El Niño.



He said the extreme heat, followed by an extreme cold weather from October to December last year, was one sign of El Niño. The same pattern occurred in the 1997 El Niño, he said.

Pagasa's prediction was confirmed by the Climate Prediction Center (CPC), an agency of the United States-based National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), when it predicted another El Niño to hit countries located in the northern hemisphere.

"The El Niño effect would be very slow, it had just started, it would be felt only at the end of the year," Rios said.

Normalito Tamayo, NIA assistant regional director, said a Japan International Cooperation Agency study conducted in 1991 showed that potable water supply in the Cordillera will only last for another 20 years.

"The 10-percent annual deterioration of water source in the region is making the El Niño problem even worse," he said.

Tamayo said they were encouraging rice farmers to give up planting rice and shift to high value crops that require less water, "especially during dry months."

There are only three major reservoirs in Benguet—the Amburayan reservoir and the two tributaries of the Agno River in Tuba and Atok towns.

The major rice producers in the region are Kalinga and Abra.

To augment the NIA's lack of water supply, Tamayo said they had distributed water tanks to farmers in Buguias and Mankayan towns in Benguet, as part of their communal irrigation system.

"They have to stock up (on) rainwater since most of the spring water sources in these areas had already dried up," he said.

But he said that during the dry season, farmers had to buy water from commercial water suppliers since they are discouraging the digging of deep wells because it might deplete the only sources of potable water.

Reynald Yawan, Mt. Province provincial environment and natural resources officer, said ironically, people who live in watershed areas "had to buy their water from commercial water delivery firms."

The NIA is conducting an information campaign to educate farmers on how to plant trees to restore the region's dying watersheds. *Jovelyn Reyes with a report from Vida Curray, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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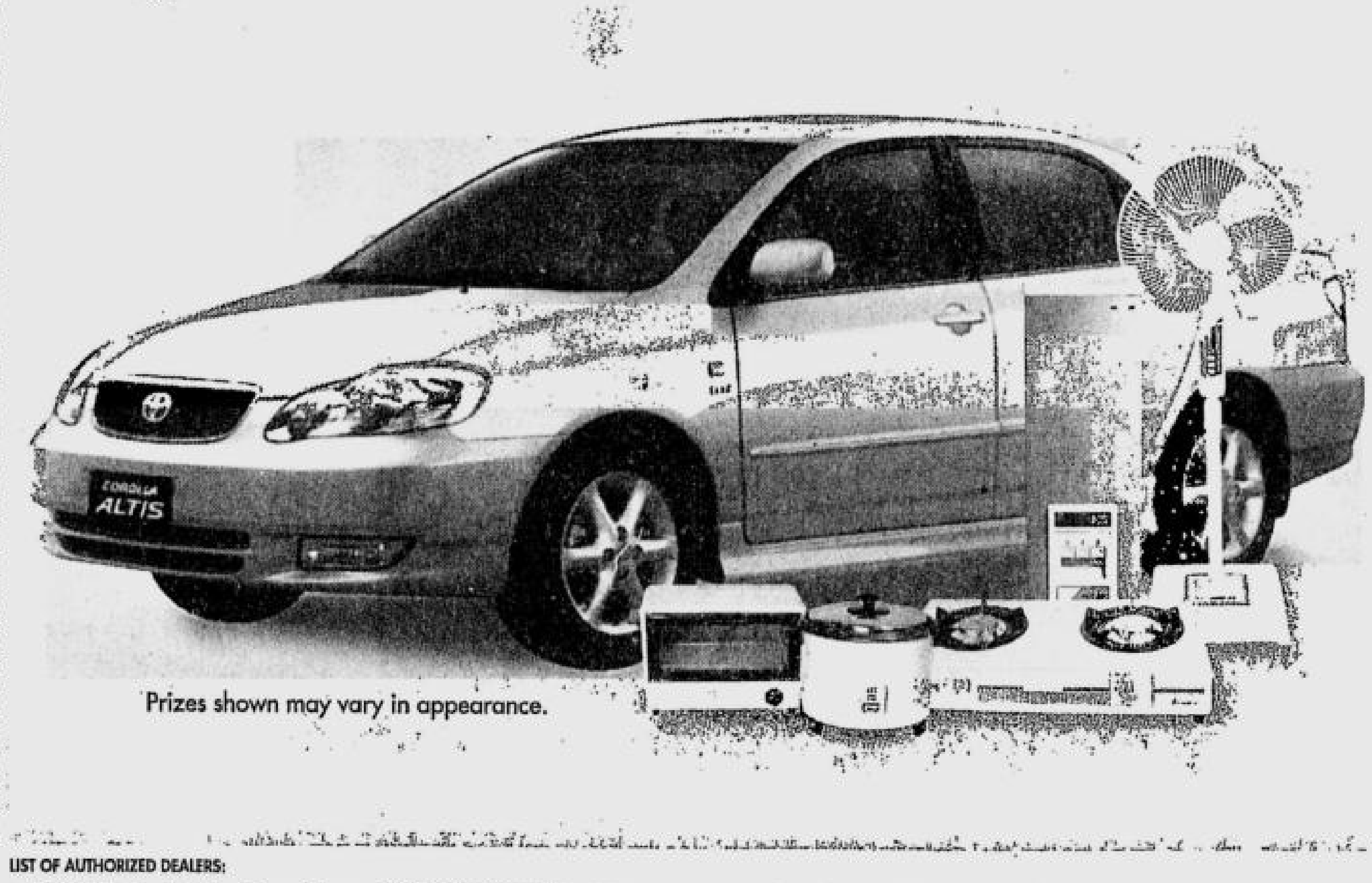

Prizes shown may vary in appearance.

Bilang handog pasasalamat ng MGC Grains sa mga tumatangkilik ng aming produkto, puwede kayong manalo ng napakaraming premyo!

Doble-doble ang mapapanalunan, dahil may pagkakataon ka nang manalo ng instant prize sa scratch and match, maaari ka pang manalo ng Toyota Altis at iba pang prizes sa aming Grand Raffle Draw , TAX FREE! Pati rice dealer kasama rin sa maaaring mabigyan ng balato!

Madali lang sumali!

Sa bawat sako ng MGC Grains Gold Cup US Imported, Original Rice o Stars & Gold na inyong bibilhin sa mga authorized dealer, makakakuha kayo ng game card sa loob ng sako. Para makasiguradong authentic ang mga game cards ninyo, hanapin ninyo ang hologram ng MGC Grains sa harap ng label.

Kiskisin ang mga scratch boxes ng game card. Kung pare-pareho ang tatlong litrato sa kahon, instant panalo ka agad.

Puwede kayong manalo ng mga sumusunod na instant premyo:
a. 25 kilos MGC Grains Gold Cup rice
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c. P50 cash prize

Ipalit ang inyong winning card sa mga authorized dealers na nakalista sa ibaba. Ang mga cards lamang na may tamang security code ang tatanggapin. Puwedeng i-claim ang mga instant prizes hanggang animnapung (60) araw pagkatapos ng promo.

Upang makasali naman sa raffle draw, isulat lamang ang inyong pangalan, address, telepono, lagda, pangalan at address ng rice dealer sa tear-off portion ng inyong game card.

Ihulog ang inyong raffle entries sa mga MGC drop boxes na nakatalaga sa lahat ng mga authorized dealers. Puwede ring ipadala sa "MGC Grains Aming Handog Pasasalamat Doble Panalo Bonanza Promo" c/o BC Concepts Inc. 2nd Floor, 7811 Don William CKC Building, Javier corner Santillan Streets, Pio del Pilar, Makati City 1230.

Huling araw ng paghulog ng raffle entries ay sa ika-23 ng July 2002, hanggang alas-siete ng gabi (7:00 PM). Gaganapin ang raffle draw ng alas-dos hanggangg alas-sais ng hapon (2:00 PM - 6:00 PM) sa ika-30 ng July, 2002 sa BC Concepts Inc. 2nd Floor, 7811 Don William CKC Building, Javier corner Santillan Streets, Pio del Pilar, Makati City 1230 sa pangangasiwa ng isang Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) representative.

Puwede kayong manalo ng mga sumusunod na premyo, tax-free:
GRAND PRIZE: Toyota Altis (For Customer)
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(For both Customer and Rice Dealer)

Isang beses ka lang puwedeng manalo sa raffle draw. Kung mabunot muli ang pangalan ninyo, makukuha ninyo ang mas malaking premyo.

Disqualified ang mga entries na kulang ang impormasyon na nakasulat sa raffle stub pati na rin ang sadyang kiniskis o tinamper na security code. Di rin mabibigyan ng premyo ang mga entries na galing sa mga empleyado ng RMJR Grains Center, kanilang mga mangangalakal, advertising agency, o bahagi ng kanilang mga security at manpower agencies, hanggang sa kanilang ikalawang kamag-anakan at kasamahan.

Ang MGC Grain ay maglalabas ng Winner's Ad isang linggo pagkatapos ganapin ang Raffle Draw.

Ang mga mananalo ay padadalhan ng nakarehistrong sulat (letter of notification) na inyong ipapakita, kasama ng inyong valid ID (passport, postal ID, driver's license, etc.) sa pag-claim ng premyo. Puwedeng kunin ang premyo hanggang animnapung (60) araw mula sa pagtanggap ng letter of notification. Pumunta lamang sa BC Concepts Inc. 2nd Floor, 7811 Don William CKC Building, Javier corner Santillan Streets, Pio del Pilar, Makati City 1230 ng alas-nueve ng umaga (9:00 AM) hanggang alas-sais ng gabi (6:00 PM), Lunes hanggang Biyernes. Anumang premyong di makukuha ng 60 araw ay ibabalik sa RMJR Grains Center na naaprubahan ng DTI.

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Nur lawyer says ex-governor just a 'fall guy'

MISUARI

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The arrest of Nur Misuari was part of a government plot to depict Mindanao as a terrorist base to justify the arrival of American troops, according to the Moro rebel leader's lawyer.

Macapanton Abbas, one of Misuari's legal counsels, also said the Macapagal administration failed to follow due process from the time Misuari was arrested in Malaysia until he was detained upon his arrival in the Philippines.

Misuari is being held at Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Abbas said the government was trying to create a scenario in Mindanao where Misuari's Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) would be linked with the bandit group Abu Sayyaf.

The plot would also link the Pentagon kidnapping gang to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), he said.

"All these legitimate organizations that are asking for self-determination are being associated with criminal groups in Mindanao and have been labeled by the United States military and the government as terrorists," Abbas said.

He said that with the terrorist tag on the MNLF and MILF, the US government, which is fighting international terrorism, has legitimized the deployment of its troops to the Philippines, particularly in Mindanao.

He said Misuari was being dragged into the scenario to make it appear that the MNLF is again fighting the government, "which is not true."

"Misuari's only fault was when he asked the government to follow and abide by the law so that the intentions of the 1996 agreement will be implemented," he said.

In 1996, the MNLF and the government signed a peace agreement.

"And I don't see any reason for Misuari and his loyal followers in the MNLF to be called terrorists when he even advocated for peace. Worse, he is being linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida group," he added.

Abbas also said the Bangsamoro people in Mindanao would file charges against Malaysian Prime Minister Mohammad Mahathir before a European court for human rights violation when the Malaysian government arbitrarily detained Misuari without a warrant of arrest issued by the Malaysian courts.

Abbas said it "was like he was kidnapped and then deported to the Philippines without valid legal grounds."

"All these unlawful acts by the Malaysian government should be answered by Mahathir when we file our case before a European court," he said.

In General Santos City, allies of the former MNLF chair were scheduled to hold a rally on Monday.

Ustadz Pendi Colano, one of the few remaining loyal field commanders of the former ARMM governor, told the INQUIRER that the rally sought to generate support for Misuari.

Colano said they were expecting more than 3,000 people to attend the rally.

The protesters were expected to assemble at the Lion's Beach in P. Acharon Boulevard and will march to the oval plaza for the rally.

Colano, one of the organizers, assured the public that the rally would be peaceful as they have secured a permit from the office of the city mayor.

He said his group had coordinated with the police and the military for the deployment of security personnel to ensure a peaceful rally.

Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. told reporters that Misuari's supporters have the right to hold protest actions as long as these are lawful.

"What we are demanding is justice and a fair trial for Professor Misuari," Colano said. *Butch D. Enerio, Aquiles Z. Zonio and Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Rally of Misuari followers peaceful

DAVAO CITY—Followers of Nur Misuari held a series of protests in various parts of Mindanao to demand the release of their jailed leader.

On Monday, some 500 Misuari supporters chanted anti-government slogans here as they urged the Macapagal administration to ease tension in Mindanao by freeing the jailed Moro leader.

However, unlike the bloody Misuari rally in Jolo last week, Monday's protest activities were very peaceful. Policemen were conspicuously absent.

Rexall Kaalim, convenor of the rallies, said those who joined came from Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur and the Muslim villages of Davao City.

Kaalim admitted that leaders of the Moro National Liberation Front who are loyal to Misuari organized the protest.

He said this was aimed at restoring peace on the island.

"The only answer to (the) peace problem in Mindanao is to free Misuari," he said.

In a statement issued during the rally, Misuari's followers insisted that it was wrong for the government to imprison the Moro rebel because he did nothing wrong in the first place.

On Saturday, about the same number of protesters turned out in a pro-Misuari rally in Marawi City.

They said Misuari was the legitimate leader of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao despite the recent elections that saw the installation of Dr. Parouk Hussin, a member of the MNLF Council of 15 that unseated Misuari as chair of the erstwhile rebel group.

Misuari faces rebellion charges in connection with the bloody uprising of his followers in Jolo on Nov. 19 and in Cabatangan, Zamboanga City on Nov. 27.

The Macapagal administration believes Misuari instigated the uprising during the 5th Bangsamoro Congress in Silangkan, Sulu. *Anthony S. Allada, Ayan C. Mellejor and Butch D. Enerio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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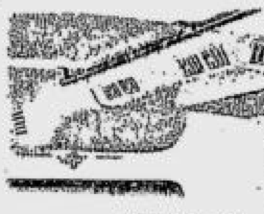

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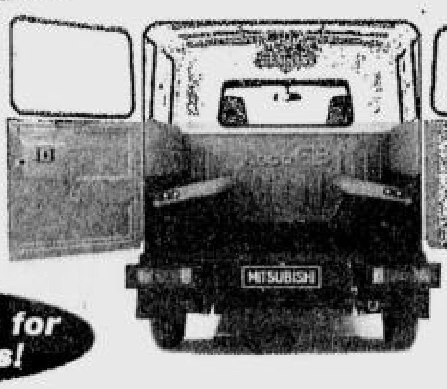

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 24° Lo 13°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 27° Lo 18°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 21° Lo 20°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 19°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 28° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 21°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 23°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/01/23/02

ROUNDUP

Shooting spree in Zambo

PAGADIAN CITY—Unidentified gunmen on Friday went on a shooting spree in Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur, killing one person and hurting two others. Police said that at around 9 a.m., the armed men killed Tingbin Ali, 42, a farmer, of Barangay Tapudok. Two hours later, the gunmen attacked a group of civilians who were going home from a pre-wedding rite in Barangay Old Labangan. Two people were wounded in the second attack.

Hernan P. dela Cruz, PDI Mindanao

Pangasinan's fetal deaths

SAN CARLOS CITY—A total of 210 fetal deaths were recorded at the Pangasinan Provincial Hospital last year. The number represented almost 30 percent of fetal deaths in the province from 1996 to 2000. Dr. Josefina Francisco, an obstetrician-gynecologist at the provincial hospital, said lack of pre-natal care and examination of pregnant women, especially in poor communities, and malnutrition among mothers caused the high fetal death rates.

Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Board fined for 'lottery'

BAGUIO CITY—The board of a financing company here was fined more than P2 million for letting chance decide on the fate of its general manager. In April 2000, the board of Rangtay ti Pagrang-ay, headed by Councilor Galo Weygan, decided the fate of Loreto Pangilinan by drawing on two pieces of paper with "retain" and "dismiss" written on them. After praying for "divine intervention," Weygan, a pastor, picked the "dismiss" paper and Pangilinan was fired. Labor arbiter Monroe Tabingan of the National Labor Relations Commission ruled that the board members' decision was illegal and ordered them to pay Pangilinan P2.42 million in back wages, separation pay and other fees.

Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

From barracks to dorm

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—The former United States Marine barracks here will be developed into a world class dormitory facility. In a statement, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo said Carcon Realty Corp. has signed a pact with the Freeport Services Corp. to develop the Upper Mau Camp Area which used to be the boot camp for US Marines. Edmund Lim, Carcon president, said they would infuse P150 million into the project.

PDI Central Luzon Desk

Body search vs robberies

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Five bus companies plying the City of San Fernando and nearby Bataan and Olongapo City will subject all their passengers to body searches to prevent highway robberies. Dubbed "Oplan Kapkap Laban sa Holdap," officials of Genesis, Panther, Philippine Rabbit, Aladdin and Victory Liner and the police will search all passengers who board their buses. This came after armed men robbed a Genesis bus and raped one of the female passengers last Jan. 10.

Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

3,008 land patents

LEGAZPI CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Bicol office here received at least 3,008 patent applications covering more than 2,000 hectares of alienable and disposable land in the region last year. The number represented 73 percent of the 4,116 patents targeted for last year, said a report by DENR Bicol director Oscar M. Hamada. He assured the department officials that the target could be realized.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Sorsogon port rehab

LEGAZPI CITY—Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez has informed commuters using the Matnog, Sorsogon-Allen, Samar sea route that the Matnog port is being rehabilitated to provide better amenities to commuters from Luzon going to the Visayas and Mindanao. Alvarez recently inspected the Matnog port in Sorsogon where thousands of passengers are always stranded during typhoons. More than 4,500 passengers cross the San Bernardino Strait daily.

Tony S. Macasinag, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Free medical services

LOCAL government officials in Mauban, Quezon, led by Mayor Fernando Llamas hailed the continuing social action program of Quezon Power (Philippines) Ltd. Co. (QPL) that has provided free medical and dental services to the town where the company owns and operates a 440-megawatt power generating plant. Over the past 12 months, 5,500 residents from the town proper and 12 barangays have availed themselves of the free health care services. In a statement, Llamas cited QPL as a "socially responsible corporate citizen."

CEBU MURDER

Ex-mayor charged with parricide

By Debra Jane Magallon
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Parricide charges were filed on Monday against former mayor Ruben Ecleo Jr. of San Jose town, Surigao del Norte, before the city prosecutor's office for the murder of his wife.

Ecleo's bodyguard, Juriven Padero, and four unidentified persons were also charged with murder for alleged involvement in the killing of Alona Bacolod-Ecleo.

Prosecutor Jose Pedrosa immediately formed a panel composed of three assistant prosecutors to handle the preliminary investigation.

Ecleo and Padero remain at large. Ecleo, head of the anti-communist Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association Inc. (PBMA), is believed to be in Surigao.

Ecleo's mother, Surigao del Norte Rep. Glenda Ecleo, earlier denied that he was involved in the killing. The victim's body was found inside a garbage bag on Jan. 8 in the southern Cebu town of Dalaguete.

The lawmaker said she had advised her son to stay in Surigao and to later prove his innocence in a proper forum.

Alona, 27, a graduating medical student at the Southwestern University in Cebu, was reported missing by her family on Jan. 6. She and Ecleo have three children and they own a house in Forest Hill, Barangay Guadalupe, this city.

Ecleo went home to Surigao in the afternoon of Jan. 8, purportedly to look for his wife, based on a note he left to their housemaid in Cebu.

Also in the afternoon of the same day, the decomposing body of Alona was found in a trash bag that was dumped in Barangay Coro, Dalaguete, 85 kilometers south of here. Autopsy reports showed that Alona was strangled.

The PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Central Visayas (CIDG-7) filed the charges against Ecleo, Padero and the other suspects based on affidavits submitted by Ben and Josebil Bacolod, the victim's brothers, and her friend Arturo Samorin Jr.

Supt. Edwin Diocos, CIDG-7 chief, said he considered Josebil's statement their "strongest circumstantial evidence."

Josebil claimed that on the night of Jan. 5, he saw Ecleo and Padero load a black garbage bag, which was sealed by masking tape, into the trunk of Alona's red Toyota Corolla car.

Similar bag

He noted that the garbage bag looked similar to the one found in Dalaguete.

Police later found bloodstains inside the car's baggage compartment. The vehicle is now being kept at the CIDG compound.

During a search conducted on the couple's house in Guadalupe, police discovered bloodstains on the doormat, bed sheet, shower curtain and a detached doorknob.

These items had been subjected to DNA examination to determine if the blood belonged to Alona.

In Surigao del Norte, police are bracing for possible violent reactions from followers of the former mayor to his arrest for parricide.

Determined

A source from the police intelligence community said loyal members of the PBMA "were determined not to hand over their master to the Cebu police."

"His arrest could turn bloody. Ruben Jr. has many armed followers determined to protect him," the source added.

Chief Supt. Alberto Olario, Caraga police chief, said Ecleo would be placed in police custody soon.

He, however, said that before the actual arrest, police would institute measures to avoid violence.

"We will conduct a dialogue with Rep. Glenda Ecleo and (the) followers of the PBMA before serving the warrant," he said.

The CIDG in Region 7 said it had gathered more pieces of evidence and potential witnesses to support their theory that Ecleo Jr. had murdered his wife.

One piece of evidence that may be used against Ecleo was his arrival in Dinagat on Jan. 9, a day after his wife's body was found. He has not been seen coming out of the island since.

Manila-based

Olarte said he received information that the former mayor is now in Manila. "That was the report I got from the CIDG," he said.

But Olarte vowed that the arrest warrant would be served, whether in Manila or in Surigao del Norte, "as soon as we are furnished a copy."

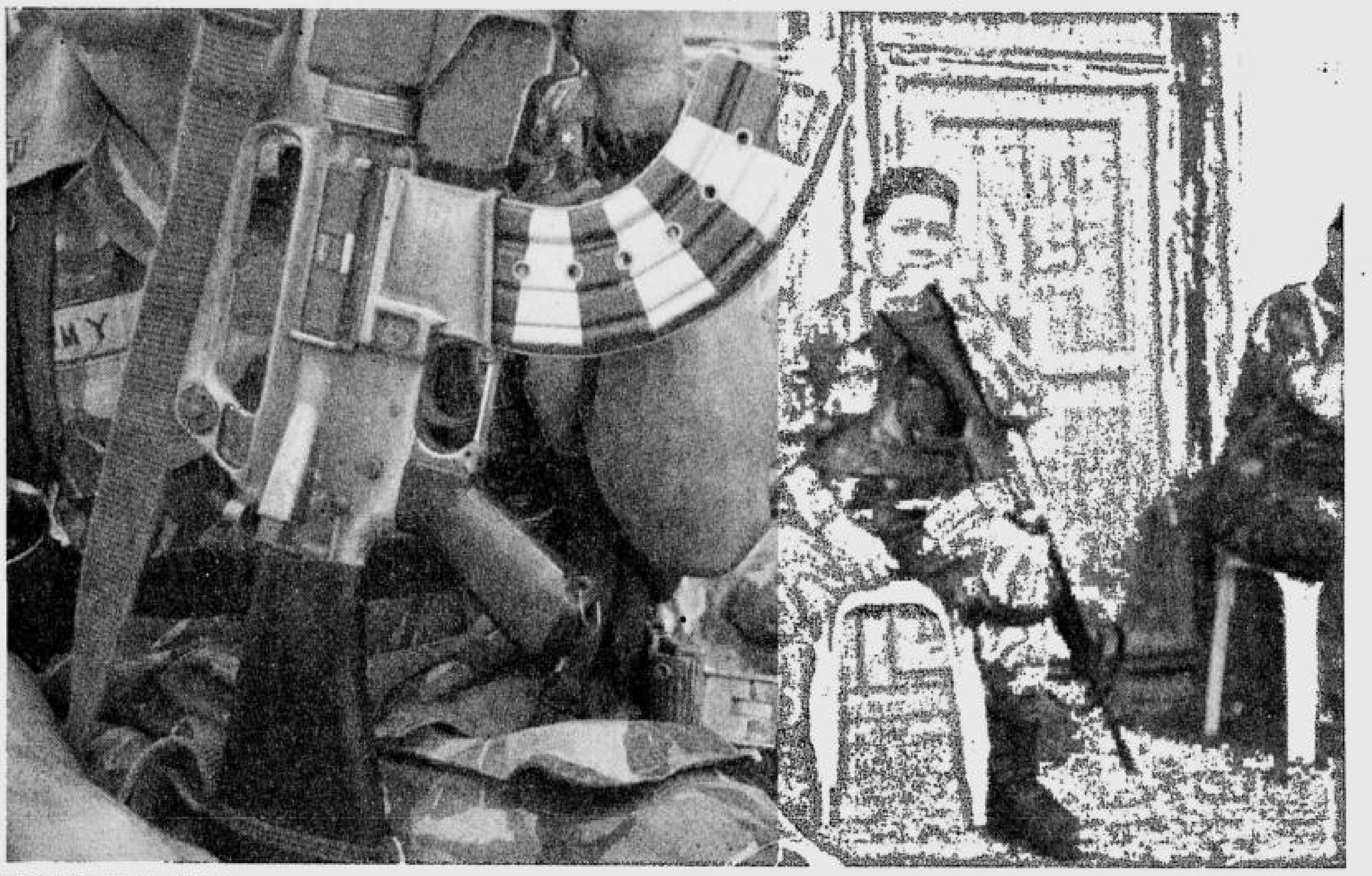
Supt. Pedro Talosig, Surigao del Norte police director, said he was hoping that the former mayor would cooperate with authorities to avoid tension.

However, Surigao del Norte Gov. Lyndon Barbers said he doubted whether there would be any resistance on the side of the Ecleos and their followers.

"I know the family. They are principled. I doubt if there (would be) any resistance," Barbers, an ally of Representative Ecleo, said.

The congresswoman herself, during an interview, gave assurance that his son "was very much willing to answer the accusations leveled against him in a proper forum, in court."

Even as he expressed optimism on the arrest, Barbers appealed to PBMA members not to resort to violence. *With a report from Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



THE OTHER SIDE DENNIS SABANGAN

Former members of the Moro National Liberation Front who have been integrated into the Philippine Army take their turn keeping the peace in Jolo, home province of jailed Moro leader Nur Misuari.

Resort defies hostage incident

THE DOS Palmas resort in Palawan will formally re-open its doors for business in March, marking a return that industry observers say would give local tourism a big boost.

The company said in a press statement that it has borrowed funds to try and get the island resort back on its feet again starting this summer.

The company said it was better to operate again than let the facilities rot, which would have meant severe depreciation through time and lack of revenue to pay off previous loans.

The resort was doing very well until the hostage-taking incident last year. It tried to stand up again despite the lack of business after the abductions, but the Sept. 11 attack on the United States affected worldwide tourism and forced Dos Palmas to close down in October.

Dos Palmas said in its statement that it was maintaining a positive outlook and believes that the tourism industry and the resort itself will recover.

"We have a good product and a good destination. We will try to improve almost every facet of our operations to attract guests here and from abroad," it said.

There will be an ongoing effort at improving the facilities and amenities of the resort. The primary focus is a complete spa facility.

Dos Palmas is one of the very few island resorts with convention facilities and has invested a lot of money in waste management systems to preserve the ecosystem.

It has come to symbolize local tourism and its successful reopening could help the industry bounce back.

The security concerns of the public have been addressed not only on the island but also throughout Honda Bay with the help of other industry operators and Palawan officials, it said.

Soldiers claim killing NPA leader in clash

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—A suspected New People's Army leader was killed while two others were wounded in a clash with policemen and Army soldiers in Barangay Bantug, Umingan town on Monday.

The fatality was identified only as "Ka Emong." Suspected rebels Zandro Esteban, 22, of San Jose City, and Brendon Caballero, 22, of Pasay City, were wounded and taken to the Medicare Hospital in Umingan.

Government soldiers also captured suspected rebels Benigno Tucay, 22, of Caloocan City, Eulalia Tolentino Antonio and one identified only as Ilene, 23, of Talugtog, Nueva Ecija.

Police recovered an AK-47 rifle, three M-16 rifles and a baby Armalite from the group.

The clash was the second reported in Umingan this month. On Jan. 8, two NPA rebels were killed and two Army soldiers were wounded in an encounter in Barangay Masiil-siil.

Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, Pangasinan police director, said the capture of the rebels showed that "we are one in our purpose of completely eradicating the presence of the rebels who threaten the peace in our province."

"We will continue with our goal of keeping stability and order and that we are always on full alert on the presence of these rebels," he said.

In Davao del Norte, two NPA members were killed in a clash with soldiers on the outskirts of Kapalong town on Sunday.

Col. Constante Pante, commander of the Army's 72nd Infantry Battalion, said the soldiers, under Capt. Norberto Lagunday, were patrolling Barangay Gupitan at about 5 a.m. when they chanced upon the rebels led by Alberto Magoncia, alias "Commander Benjack."

The slain rebels were identified as Jhonee Ardines, alias "Jamal," and a certain Rannie, the alleged wife of Magoncia. Rannie was listed in the military's order of battle as secretary of the NPA's Front Committee 35 in Davao del Norte.

Pante said the soldiers also captured an NPA rebel.

Before fleeing, the rebels executed Loreto Balino, a village leader whom they abducted in Sitio Binungbongan, Barangay Suaon.

The soldiers recovered M-16, M-14 and two Garand rifles, several rounds of ammunition and two handheld radios from the rebels. *Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Anthony S. Allada and Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Training plane crashes in Bulacan; 2 unhurt

PULILAN, Bulacan—Two pilots escaped unhurt after their two-seat Cessna 150 plane crashed in a rice field in Barangay Poblacion here on Tuesday morning, reports said.

Reports from the Air Transportation Office at the Plaridel airstrip in Bulacan identified the pilots as Capt. Michael Joseph Santos, 24, and Suerte Faustino, 22.

On Monday last week, a Philippine Air Force training plane plowed through a residential area in Cabanatuan City, killing at least seven people, including its two pilots.

The PAF's two-seat S211 training jet exploded after crashing. The crash burned houses in the neighborhood.

Jorge Forrefranca, ATO-Plaridel chief, said the plane, owned by Pasay City-based Aero Flight Corp., took off from the Plaridel airstrip and suffered engine failure at 9:30 a.m.

Forrefranca said Faustino was in the pilot's seat when the plane crashed.

Reports said the plane, which is being used by the firm's flying school as a training plane, originally came from Pasay City for a routine training flight.

It was scheduled to return to Pasay at 9:30 a.m. when its engine malfunctioned in mid-air. The plane crashed in a ricefield reportedly owned by Feliza Navarro.

Forrefranca said only the plane's front part was damaged when it overturned after crashing.

He said the plane did not explode, and Santos and Faustino just walked out of the wreck.

Forrefranca ruled out pilot error in the crash. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

French travel writer dies of heart attack in Bohol

By Connie E. Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A French journalist died of a heart attack in Bohol on Monday while he was on an educational and promotional tour initiated by the Department of Tourism.

Olivier Ponchy, 46, a freelance writer for a Paris-based travel magazine, was declared dead on arrival at a private hospital in Tagbilaran City.

His body was taken to a funeral parlor in Cebu City where it was reportedly received by staff members from the French consulate in Manila. It was not known immediately if the remains would be flown directly to his family in France.

Baby Vallo, head of the Provincial Tourism Office in Bohol, said Ponchy was among the European journalists who participated in the DOT-initiated educational and promotional tour of Cebu and Bohol.

Ponchy might have been suffering from a heart problem as pills for heart ailment were found in his bag, she said.

Fourteen journalists, all travel writers, took part in the tour. Seven of them came from Germany, four from the United Kingdom, and three from France.

The group arrived in Cebu on Jan. 19 from Singapore, mainly to see the annual "Sinulog" grand parade last Sunday. On Monday, they were brought to Bohol.

Vallo said the group was brought to the island's tourist attractions, including the world-famous Chocolate Hills and the tarsier sanctuary.

Their last stop was at the Bohol Beach Club where the guests were served cocktails, she added. It was about 5:30 p.m. when Ponchy collapsed.

After he was given first aid treatment, Ponchy was taken to a private hospital in Tagbilaran where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

INQUIRER Northern Luzon
JUN BANDAYREL, Editor ▪ ROLANDO B. FERNANDEZ, Bureau Chief

Bolinaoans on the warpath again

BY YOLANDA FUERTES
Bolinao, Pangasinan

WILL the diverse, beautiful but fragile Bolinao-Anda coral reef system in Pangasinan win against illegal activities that threaten its very existence?

Residents of Bolinao town, who won the war against a proposed cement plant years back, are again on the warpath. This time, the battle is against unscrupulous people who abuse the sea by engaging in illegal fishing through the use of cyanide, sodium and fine-mesh nets, and coral gathering.

Margaret Celeste, an environmental activist, said threats to the 8,000-hectare reef system "come not only from outsiders but also from some residents who care nothing about ecological protection as long as they are making money."

"The reef is the lifeblood not only of Bolinao but the entire Lingayen Gulf. Thus, we have to do our best to defend it against illegal activities," said Celeste, who led the fight against the proposed cement plant in her town.

At the Hundred Islands National Park in Alaminos town, the corals are also facing the same threats.

"Every morning, you can hear something like a 21-gun salute near the islands, courtesy of blast fishers," said barangay councilman Severino Veniola.

The illegal fishers would dive first using a compressor to find a school of fish, then return to the boat and start blasting away, he said. He had reported the incidents to the Philippine Coast Guard, but the illegal activities continue.

Aquarium enthusiasts also threaten the corals. They gather or buy soft and hard corals from divers who indiscriminately gather these to decorate aquariums.

Prof. Nemesio Montaño, deputy director of the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, which maintains a laboratory in the town, said pollution resulting from the fish cage operations might reach the coral areas in the near future.

He admitted that efforts to conserve the reef "are slow compared to the entire problem of marine biodiversity."

Multisectoral efforts

"Efforts to protect the coral reef must be multisectoral. The community must be active because efforts of the government and the scientific sector will be futile without the community's cooperation," Montaño said.

Celeste said fish cages in Bolinao, where *bangus* (milkfish) are cultured, might also cause pollution that endangers the corals.

"True, the areas where the fish cages were established have been identified by the local government and the UPMSI, but the cages are hardly regulated. There are so many fishing structures already," Celeste lamented.

Easier said than done. Celeste said many fishermen were indifferent to the corals' protection.

"The fishermen are the beneficiaries of fish sanctuaries, but perhaps because of lack of strong leadership, they have abandoned the sanctuaries and continued fishing there," she said.

Only one of the four fish sanctuaries established in 1997 is being maintained—the 15-hectare sanctuary in Balingasay village. The three others—in the villages of Pilar, Victory and Lucero—have been virtually abandoned and illegal fishing activities have resumed there.

The sanctuaries are usually over coral reef. Thus, the reef system is protected from illegal fishing if the sanctuaries are maintained.

"The problem is that the identified sanctuaries are traditional fishing grounds. The fishermen underwent an informal environmental education conducted by the UPMSI, but it looked like they forgot what they had learned," Celeste said.

Marine life revival

On a happy note, the Balingasay fish sanctuary, under the stewardship of the Samahan ng mga Mangingisda at Mamamayan ng Balingasay (Sammabal), is showing signs of marine life revival.

Jesem Gabatin, Sammabal president, said the sanctuary was established in 1997 amid the apathy of most residents. "They did not believe that the sanctuary will regenerate the already dwindling resources," he said.

Sammabal members, including the *bantay-dagat* (sea watchers) volunteers and members of the barangay council, take turns in patrolling the sanctuary and the adjoining marine reserves day and night.

Gabatin claimed that about 40 percent of the coral cover in the sanctuary had been revived during the last four years that the place was closed to all kinds of fishing.

In April last year, the Marine Fisheries Resource Management Project, the UP Coastal Resource Management, the UP College of Social Work and Community Development, and nongovernment organizations that extended technical assistance to Bolinao left the town.

On their own, the leaders of the different environmental groups created the Bolinao Marine Ecological Fund Foundation Inc. (Bomeffi) which aims to protect and preserve the marine and coastal resources of the town.

The Bomeffi hopes to generate and avail of funds through grants and solicitations to support the initiatives of the people's organizations and local governments in coastal resources management, Celeste, Bomeffi president, said.

"We intend to be active in reviving and monitoring the fish sanctuaries," Celeste said.

ENVIRONMENTALIST Margaret Celeste again picks up the fight of Bolinao residents to preserve the town's fragile marine resources.
FILE PHOTO/RIZA MANANSALA

BAYAN NG CUYAPO
LALAWIGAN NG NUEVA ECIJA

CUYAPO marker: The town has many poignant stories to tell.
ANSELMO S. ROQUE

Breaching the 25-yr divide

BY PERCY D. DELLA

EVERYONE has a hometown—real, adopted or im agined. For someone who'd been away from his hometown for ages, it remained a dream tucked in the shadows of the mind.

The recent death of my mother at the ancestral home in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, brought me back to my hometown after 25 years of self-exile in America.

Finally, the mental shadows lifted and there it was—my dream, my hometown in its entire splendor.

All of Cuyapo seemed to have cried with my family on the Thursday I arrived. I cried for my departed mom and for breaching a 25-year divide—at long last.

In a bittersweet homecoming, there were tears at seeing faces I thought I would never see again, tears as I learned for the first time of the deaths of close relatives, friends and elders who, like my mom, had profound impressions on my life.

Amid the mourning, there was subdued joy because in the years in which I'd had no contact, whole new lives have emerged—brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, new nephews and nieces, even grandchildren.

We, siblings and cousins, locked up tightly around one another, our childhood flashing before us, realizing that the cycle of life has come full circle.

We have become parents and grandparents. We are privy once more to the joys and sorrows of young adulthood, of first dances and of crushes that turn to first loves.

Tearful reunion

There was a long, tearful reunion with my 81-year-old father, a sweet man yet with steely Ilocano resolve. I have never seen him cry until that moment. Group bear hugs with friends and relations ensued, especially with the surviving *manongs* and *manangs* (elders) who were our sitters and protectors when my sisters and I were growing up. We treated these folks like family until they left to start their own.

Clasping hands and shedding tears with them reinforced my mother's advice to "take care of the little people on your way up, because you're likely to meet them again on your way down."

There's a certain tinge of a Horton Foote play to my homecoming.

My mom, realizing the end was near, practically dragged my father home from a comfortable life in California four years ago. To set foot on Cuyapo once more—and for good.

In a different sort of way, she replayed the wish of Foote's Mrs. Carrie Watts to see her hometown one last time in a "Trip to Bountiful."

Cuyapo was my mother's Bountiful, Texas. Mom was a country girl, having been raised on the land. She spent 15 years in America, visiting Cuyapo three times in that span. Still, she always hankered for the country life in the old hometown.

I had always thought that Foote's distinctive feel for small town life was contrived for his plays and for the screen—notably for his Academy Award-winning screenplay from the Harper Lee book "To Kill a Mockingbird."

Until I came home and rekindled the strength and the beauty of such a connection.

Cuyapo could be Maycomb, Alabama, in "Mockingbird," and even Foote's own real Texan hometown of Wharton. Like any other hometowns, Cuyapo has poignant stories to tell.

(To be continued next week)

Veteran sportswriter ***Percy D. Della*** *is now based in Sacramento, California, where he works in the state's Department of Energy. After more than 20 years of self-exile in the US, he went home to Cuyapo last month to bury his mother.*

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Computer giant chips in ₱5B

(From page A1)

operations in Makati City to its Cavite plant, about 60 km away. It would also phase out the production of older products.

Ms Macapagal said Intel's decision to put up the world's biggest testing center in the Philippines would boost the country's investment climate.

She noted that Intel's move was "the same signal sent by the very large rallies in the stock market on Monday and Friday."

According to the President, the company was "totally satisfied and impressed by the productivity of the great Filipino workforce."

Robert Martin, Intel general manager in the Philippines, said the investment was "a tribute to the excellence of the Filipino worker."

But Chit Ventura, a company spokesperson, said jobs might be lost as a result of the consolidation of the two plants, but said it was too soon to know how many.

While shifting production to Cavite would generate some cost savings, Intel said it could not immediately quantify the amount.

About 4,500 people currently work at Intel's Cavite plant, while 1,500-2,000 work in Makati.

Intel noted that President Macapagal had been encouraging businesses to shift operations away from the congested Metro Manila area.

Intel said its Makati office would still handle several functions, including sales and marketing, call center operations, and design of flash memory chips.

Intel said the additional funding would bring its investment in the country to $1.3 billion (about P65 billion), and make the Philippines the firm's biggest assembly and test site.

Last week, Intel posted fourth quarter profits and revenue that exceeded Wall Street forecasts, although the company said it did not see signs of economic recovery following the worst year in the semiconductor sector's history.

It said capital expenditure for 2002 would fall by 25 percent from $7.3 billion in 2001.

Intel, which has been operating in the Philippines for the 27 years, has been the country's top exporter the last five years.

The company recently received the Philippine Quality Award from the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Gawad Kigtawan and Kalusugan Award from the Department of Labor and Employment. *Reuters*

HAPPILY briefing Palace reporters about the Intel investment, President Macapagal is backed up by Intel president Robin Martin and Trade Secretary Mar Roxas. EDWIN BACASMAS

Sabaya kin holding Burnhams–AFP

(From page A1)

Brig. Gen Glicerio Sua, chief of Task Force Comet, said the military was trying its best to free the hostages. "We want to get them out before the Balikatan starts (next month)," he said.

Sua was referring to the RP-US war exercise "Kalayaan-Aguila 2002," in which US forces will take a more active role in the campaign against the Abu Sayyaf in terms of training and tactical advice at the frontlines.

In Manila, Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for President Macapagal-Arroyo, said military operations to rescue the Burnhams would continue without letup even if the US government had yet to fully deploy the 660 troops who would take part in the Balikatan.

He said the Burnhams were last spotted in the jungles of Basilan on Jan. 9.

Citing military reports, Tiglao said troops were tracking down about 80 heavily armed bandits who were holding the hostages.

"Our troops are experiencing difficulties because of the harsh terrain," he said of the 5,000-7,000 soldiers, including a US-trained Light Reaction Company, now deployed in Basilan.

Pierantoni

In Pagadian City, Bishop Zacarias Jimenez yesterday told the INQUIRER that he had received a recorded message purportedly from kidnapped Italian priest Giuseppe Pierantoni.

"I wish I will be freed on my birthday so that we can celebrate it together," Jimenez quoted the taped voice as saying in Cebuano.

Pierantoni, known as Father Beppe among the clergy and his parishioners in Dimataling, Zamboanga del Sur, will turn 45 tomorrow.

Jimenez said the voice tape, with a running time of about two minutes, was handed to him by a staff member of the Diocese of Pagadian around 6 a.m. Monday.

"I was very sure it was Father Beppe. The voice is authentic," he told the INQUIRER.

Jimenez said the tape should serve to dispel rumors that the priest, who was abducted Oct. 17 by suspected members of the Pentagon group, was dead.

But the bishop later admitted that he first heard the voice tape last Jan. 3, when the supposed kidnappers called him on his mobile phone and said they would play it.

"When they did play the tape, I immediately recognized his Italian accent, even if he was speaking in Cebuano," Jimenez said, adding:

"But I told the kidnappers that I wanted to be sure it is really he. So I asked them to send me the tape. And they did on Monday."

The bishop also expressed his and other clergy members' belief that the kidnappers had no intention of harming Pierantoni.

He quoted the supposed Pierantoni as saying: "I want to tell you that I am in good condition and good health. Those holding me have no intentions of killing me, so you should not worry."

At a loss

Still, Jimenez and the Pagadian clergy are at a loss on what to do.

"The kidnappers have not talked with us about any demand since Father Beppe was abducted," the bishop said. "How can we secure his freedom without knowing what to do? I hope they will communicate with us and say what it is that they really want so Father Beppe would be released," Jimenez said.

But he admitted that certain persons and groups had been trying to get Pierantoni released.

"Some of them are politicians," he said. "It is possible that they know what the demand is. It is only sad that we were not told of the demand, if indeed there is any."

While the military is positive that the Pentagon had abducted Pierantoni, it is clueless on the location of the group and its captive.

"They are very mobile," said Brig. Gen. Angel Atutubo, chief of Task Force Giuseppe. "They would move from one place to another to avoid being detected."

But Atutubo, also deputy commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division based in Zamboanga del Sur, said the military was confident that it would be able to rescue Pierantoni "in due time."

"We are just waiting for the right timing," he said.

FBI

Agents of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation are now in the country to look into the kidnap-slay of American Guillermo Sobero.

Sobero was kidnapped along with the Burnhams and 17 Filipinos from a resort in Palawan on May 27 last year. The Abu Sayyaf announced that it beheaded him in July, but it was only late last year that his remains were found and identified.

Four FBI agents made a courtesy call on Director General Leandro Mendoza and other top officials of the Philippine National Police in Camp Crame on Monday. Their names were not announced.

Mendoza is a member of the International Police and the Association of Southeast Asian Chiefs of Police.

"(The FBI agents) are here to look into (the kidnap-slay of Sobero)," said Deputy Director General Rex Piad, head of the PNP Directorial Staff and one of those present at the meeting.

Piad said the agents would closely coordinate with local police in the investigation.

He later said that the agents' visit was "an ordinary thing," and that "police officials from other countries often drop by here unannounced (and) we have close coordination with them."

Other officials, who asked not to be named, said the agents were here to gather evidence against the Abu Sayyaf in connection with the abduction of Sobero and other Americans preparatory to filing appropriate charges before US courts. The agents' work is part of the United States' "legal offensive" against international terrorism, they said.

The US government considers the Abu Sayyaf, which gained notoriety for the abduction in Malaysia of a group composed mostly of Europeans in the year 2000, as a terrorist group with links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Piad also disclosed that a bone of Sobero's sent in a package to the United States for DNA testing had gotten mixed up with letters suspected to contain anthrax at a post office in Arizona.

According to Director Lucas Managuelod, head of the PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management, the FBI agents reiterated their offer to train local police in investigative work.

He said this kind of training had in fact been going on for years.

Brownback

In a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo, US Sen. Sam Brownback expressed confidence that the Philippine government would be able to resolve the hostage crisis with help from his government.

"I have confidence in the Republic of the Philippines, in your leadership of that great country, and in the assistance which the United States stands to deliver in resolving a problem that threatens citizens of both the Philippines and the US," Brownback said in the letter dated Jan. 20.

Brownback earlier stirred a furor for saying that the Philippines would be the "next Afghanistan."

The President said the other day that Brownback had apologized for this statement and reiterated that American involvement would be limited only to training.

In his letter, Brownback said US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld had clarified that the US troops would "participate in a program to help the (Philippine military) upgrade counterterrorism capabilities, not engage in combat."

Still quoting Rumsfeld, Brownback said the US was "leaning forward" in situations "where American hostages are being held."

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said in a chance interview that the letter "settles the Brownback issue." ***With reports from Hernan P. dela Cruz and Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau; TJ Burgonio in Manila***

AFP . . .

(From page A1)

Adan, who arrived on Saturday from Hawaii where he attended a public relations seminar, also said the war exercise would shorten the acquisition time for the military equipment needed by the AFP.

He said the usual waiting time was three years, but that the exercise would cut this short.

"Three years!" he noted. "In the meantime, what happens to us? Will the Abu Sayyaf, the extremist secessionist groups, lord it over Mindanao?"

As many as 660 US troops led by US Brig. Gen. Donald Wurster are expected to arrive in batches over the coming days to participate in Balikatan, which is expected to formally start on Jan. 30 in Zamboanga City.

According to exercise director Brig. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio, a large number of the visiting troops will be based in Cebu City and will serve as support for the 160 members of the US Special Forces that will take part in the actual training.

Wurster visited Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

Night flights

Brig. Gen. Neon Ebuen, commander of the 205th Tactical Wing of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) in Mactan, Cebu, told the INQUIRER in Zamboanga City that Filipino pilots would train their American counterparts in night flying.

"Our instructor pilots (will) train (the) Americans particularly on how to fly at night in the jungles of Basilan," Ebuen said. "That's our expertise."

Ebuen was at the Edwin Andrews Air Base yesterday in Zamboanga to supervise the night flying capability and proficiency test for Filipino pilots.

He said about 400 Filipino pilots could claim expertise in night flying, particularly in Mindanao.

In return for learning to fly at night, he said, the Americans could teach their Filipino counterparts the use of top-of-the-line equipment and gadgets.

Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, chief of the Southern Command, said Filipino pilots were very capable but lacked the sophisticated gadgets being used in the United States. Still, he said, they had learned to cope with the lack.

Brig. Gen. Nelson Eslao, commander of the PAF's 3rd Tactical Wing, said at least 19 pilots based in Manila and Cebu had hurdled the proficiency tests as of Monday night.

PAF sources said the night flying exercises would be done using a "traffic pattern" and would be limited to the perimeter of an air base.

He said that as a rule, aircraft should not fly at night outside the "aerodrome (perimeter)," and that even aircraft on a mission should land 30 minutes before sunset.

Refueling post

The Mactan Benito Ebuen Air Base in Mactan is being used as refueling station for US aircraft participating in Balikatan. Capt. Enrico Canaya, spokesperson of the air base's Tactical Operation Command, said three US C-130 cargo planes landed separately on Sunday to refuel.

"We are expecting more planes (from the US Air Force) to come in, but we don't know the exact date," he told the INQUIRER.

He said these stops were covered by the RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty and Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).

Canaya said the first two C-130s, both from Kadena, Japan, landed for refueling in the morning and the afternoon. Both were bound for the Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga.

The third C-130, coming from Zamboanga, landed before 5 p.m. and later proceeded to Japan.

"The cargo planes did not stay long at the Edwin Andrews Air Base after unloading their cargo for security reasons," Canaya said.

He said the three cargo planes could not land simultaneously at Edwin Andrews because of its limited parking area for aircraft.

"One advantage of the (Benito Ebuen base) is a bigger military ramp space," he said, adding that the US Air Force also preferred it because of the better peace and order situation in Cebu and Mactan.

Other aircraft from Australia, Singapore, Japan and Malaysia have been stopping at Benito Ebuen to refuel or make emergency landings.

These stopovers have diplomatic clearance and are authorized by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Gag order

At the Clark Special Economic Zone, a gag order has been imposed on US military officials overseeing the "Balance Piston 02-1" exercise ongoing in various parts of Luzon.

"Both the US Embassy and the AFP have told us not to make any more statements," Maj. Kevin Colyer, Balance Piston commander, told the INQUIRER yesterday in a phone interview.

Colyer was replying to a question on why the press briefing scheduled after the exercise's formal opening ceremony had been cancelled.

Asked about the number of US troops that remained at Clark, Colyer referred the INQUIRER to the press attaché of the US Embassy.

He had earlier announced that about 400 US Army, Air Force and Navy troops in his contingent were participating in the month-long exercise.

Colyer's refusal to disclose information raised strong reactions among reporters covering Clark. The implementing guidelines on VFA exercises require the Philippine and American sides to make the details of the exercises public.

A source in the PAF confirmed that personnel of the Presidential Commission on the VFA (VFAcomm), the inter-agency body monitoring the war games, were not around to monitor the conduct of the exercise.

A VFAcomm report earlier disclosed violations involving unilateral flights and on-ground activities that did not engage Filipino troops. VFA exercises are supposed to be jointly conducted by Filipino and US troops.

New VFAcomm executive director Jaime Yambao could not be reached for comment. Elmer Cato, its former acting executive director, kept mum.

VFAcomm sources said monitoring was the "Philippines' weakest link." They were referring to the restrictions imposed by the US military on the inspection of the contents of US warships and aircraft. ***With reports from Julie S. Alipala and Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Connie E. Fernandez, PDI Visayas Bureau; Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

It's final: High court shuts door on Jalosjos

(From page A1)

was convicted in 1997 but reelected in 1998 and 2001, from the House of Representatives.

In the House, however, Assistant Majority Leader Francis Escudero said Congress was unsure whether the expulsion would be automatic or would require a two-thirds vote of all House members.

"With resounding absurdity, accused-appellant pictures himself as a captured, helpless and submissive prey enslaved by an overpowering passion instigated and provoked by an 11-year-old experienced sex worker," read the two-page decision handed down yesterday afternoon.

The Supreme Court, voting en banc, said the motion for reconsideration was untenable because the victim's unchaste character, as alleged by Jalosjos, was neither a defense nor a mitigating circumstance in rape.

"Likewise, whatever consent or 'provocation' an 11-year-old girl gave to a sexual congress is no consent or 'provocation' at all. The very essence of the crime of statutory rape is the carnal knowledge of a woman below 12 years old," the decision said.

On Nov. 16, 2001, the high tribunal affirmed the Makati Regional Trial Court's 1997 decision sentencing Jalosjos to reclusion perpetua on two counts of statutory rape and six counts of acts of lasciviousness.

Despite the lower court decision, Jalosjos successfully ran for reelection twice.

Unique case

Reflecting the novelty presented by what he called a "unique case," Escudero at first categorically denied that the House would automatically expel Jalosjos, saying under House rules a two-thirds vote of all 214 House members was required.

But he later said several congressmen were of the opinion that the expulsion would be automatic and that the House need not vote on it. "This is a unique case because the crime was not committed during this Congress," Escudero said.

Escudero said other House leaders were of the view that the ethics committee had no jurisdiction over it because Jalosjos was convicted of a crime that happened in a previous Congress.

"So there's a chance that the expulsion would be effected at once," he said, as soon as the SC turns over a copy of its decision to the House.

Before any vote, House rules require the ethics committee to make a recommendation.

"Under our rules, there is no automatic expulsion," Escudero said.

Once the Supreme Court transmits its decision to the House, Escudero said, the rules committee will refer the communication to the ethics committee, that would then convene a meeting to sign a report recommending his expulsion.

Escudero could not say when the committee would meet. He said Isabela Rep. Antonio Abaya, ethics committee chair, was ill but that any of his vice chairs could take charge.

Escudero said it also remained to be seen whether a special election would be held to fill up Jalosjos' seat once he is expelled. "In the past there were no special elections to fill up vacancies arising from the deaths of congressmen," Escudero said.

He said that if the barangay elections would push through in May, a special election could be held in Jalosjos' district. This would require a special law, however.

Escudero added that if Jalosjos' seat is vacated, Speaker Jose de Venecia could appoint a neighboring congressman or a special assistant to attend to his constituents.

Escudero said Jalosjos had not been receiving his salary.

Writer wars on sloppy US English

(From page A1)

real weight.

"American English is in a bad way, and it's probably not going to get better any time soon," he told about 50 people gathered at a Washington bookstore over the weekend to hear his wry lament on the state of English in the United States.

Smith, 43, wants to remind Americans to eat their proverbial vegetables and avoid the temptation to use fashionable yet function-free phrases such as "highly impactful," "user-friendly" and "at-one-ment."

In his new book, "Junk English," the New York-based Smith categorizes the sloppy syntax the Americans hear and use each day and translates it into better English.

In what he describes as a "painful" process, Smith immersed himself in jargon and bad English for six months—studying magazines and newspapers, reading the inserts in his phone bill, watching television commercials and listening to talk radio.

'Issue' vs 'problem'

Certain patterns began to emerge, and many of the same words cropped up repeatedly—words such as "issue," "address," "factor" and "focus."

Smith reckons that the softer, gentler word "issue" is often used in place of the more concrete "problem" because issues merely need to be "addressed" while problems demand to be solved.

Another common offense is inflating vocabulary unnecessarily—"saying ordinary things in extraordinary ways," like using "expeditiously" in place of "quickly," he said.

Words that were once powerful—such as "hero," "visionary," "crisis" or "unique"—have been weakened by overuse.

Certain phrases wear out their welcome by using more words than necessary—"the financial sector" in lieu of "finance," or "on a daily basis" instead of "daily," Smith said.

Some words, he said, are dangerously unclear, often used as political or marketing tools to evade responsibility or "provide an illusion of information."

Terror attacks led to more 'bad English'

It used to be that language skills were gleaned from the great writers, Smith said. Now, politicians and advertisers set the patterns—and words aimed at "deliberate obfuscation" are robbing the English language of its riches.

As the United States wages its war on terrorism in response to the Sept. 11 attacks, "there has never been a period so good for such bad English," he said.

Leaders here and abroad constantly describe their enemies as "evil." Invasions have been toned down into "incursions." And prisoners like the 140-plus al-Qaida and Taliban members being held at a US naval base in Cuba are now "detainees."

"It's a sort of deliberate, calculated abuse of the language that's not being done to help increase understanding," Smith told AFP. "It's deliberate obfuscation. It's deliberate debasement of the language."

Useful new words

However, not all newly created words are bad, he pointed out.

Phrases such as "road rage" are useful because they convey meaning rather than obscuring it.

One of the problems inherent in "Junk English" is that "we have become deaf to the emptiness and ugliness of much of what we read and hear and say" and we are losing the ability to be critical thinkers, he said.

"It is not too much to ask that sentences mean something."

Yet Smith, a graduate of New Jersey's Rowan University with a bachelor's degree in communications, does not fancy himself a one-man Academie Anglaise.

Unlike France's 40-member Academie Francaise, which guards the integrity of the French language, Smith does not believe in linguistic mandates.

"I don't like that sort of top-down approach to language," he told AFP.

Still, his hope for the book's readers is that whenever they utter "Junk English" in the future—speaking, for example, of a decision that will "impact" one's life rather than merely "affecting" it—"a little pain shoots through your skull and you stop," he said with a smile. *AFP*

RP joins prayer for world peace

(From page A1)

II, was an offshoot of last year's terrorist attacks on the United States and the ensuing military operations against the perpetrators.

"Peace is the primary need of all the world, right now. Our economic misery has been deepened by the terrible tragedy of the twin towers in New York City, and by the intense military action that followed it," Reuter said in a letter to Msgr. Hernando Coronel, spokesperson of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

Sin also asked the "faithful to go on a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace, Edsa" to implore the Lord "for peace and the conversion of hearts."

Today's prayer vigil at the Edsa Shrine is from 8 to 10 p.m.

The event at Assisi, a virtual religious summit, will include, aside from the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Anglican Church in England; the patriarch of Constantinople, the head of the Greek Orthodox Church in the Middle East; leaders of the African traditional religions; leaders of Islam; Buddhist monks; Hindu leaders of India; and Jewish rabbis from Europe and Asia.

The prayer meeting will be shown worldwide via satellite television with commentaries in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and Ukrainian.

"When (the Pope) embraces the Muslims, the Buddhists, the separated Greeks, on television, it is a vivid visual image of the leading religions of the world recognizing the fact that we are all children of the same God, one family, brothers," Reuter said in a statement released to the media.

"John Paul is trying to lead the world to peace in the only way that is feasible: unity, friendship, brotherhood, love," he said.

He described the Pope's move as a "heroic, Herculean effort to unite the prayerful people of the world."

Make-or-break meeting today

(From page A1)

have to talk to the media," she said when asked about her breakfast meeting with Guingona.

She would only say that the Vice President had not offered to resign.

Over the weekend, Guingona admitted to the INQUIRER that he was agonizing whether to make an open break with the President over the deployment of American troops in Basilan and over a new military agreement with the United States, the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA). *(See story on page A1.)*

"As far as I am concerned, there is no MLSA," Guingona said.

Already, Ms Macapagal had instructed to form a committee that would discuss the parameters of the MLSA. The committee includes the departments of foreign affairs, national defense and the National Security Council(NSC).

In Guingona's view, the MLSA was a "secret pact that would pave the way for the permanent presence of the US troops here," according to a DFA source.

"The MLSA was supposed to have been signed during the visit of Ms Macapagal to the United States last November but it was preempted when the news about it leaked in the newspapers," the source added.

Guingona found the MLSA "outrageous" in that it would allow military structures to be built in the country for the US troops while they were here "for whatever purpose."

"While it is true that the Philippines would subsidize the expenses of the US troops, what Guingona found more outrageous was that the MLSA would eventually pave the way for the permanent stay of the American troops using the military structures and facilities that they are now building in this country," the source said.

Stick to principles

"My concern is to stress my concerns. We will discuss important matters at the NSC. But I will have to stress my concerns," Guingona vowed.

The Vice President refused to disclose exactly what his concerns were but DFA sources said Guingona was not likely to "turn back on his principles."

Ms Macapagal herself had said last week that Guingona had "raised some issues" over the deployment of up to 660 US soldiers, including at least 160 Special Forces trainers, to be sent to the strongholds of the Abu Sayyaf guerrillas in Mindanao.

Guingona raised his objections in a meeting on Jan. 12 with President Macapagal, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and Palace spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao.

The defense department presented a briefing about the ongoing Balikatan exercises in Mindanao which Guingona said was already a done deal and that he had not been consulted when he sits in the RP-US Mutual Defense Board Council of Ministers together with US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

"Expect a showdown tomorrow. It will be a fight over principles. It is a matter of principles. This could be a make or break meeting between the President and the Vice President and we will know if some people will resign or not after the meeting," A DFA source said.

"Guingona will push for his arguments against the extended stay of American troops because it is unconstitutional and will fight tooth and nail for his resolve to preserve national sovereignty," the source added.

'Magnificent 12'

As a senator, Guingona was one of the "Magnificent 12" who voted in 1991 to close down the US military bases in the Philippines. In 1998 he voted against the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and allied himself with the Junk VFA Movement, a broad alliance of legislators, local officials, Church leaders,cause-oriented groups, sectoral organizations of youth, women, workers, peasants and environmentalists with chapters all over the country.

"The Vice President believes the Philippines is not at war with any other nation such that the presence of a sizeable number of American troops is completely unnecessary. There is no foreign aggression here," said the DFA source who asked not to be named.

The source said Guingona made it clear to Ms Macapagal that he would only allow the US troops to observe "short visits not lasting more than four weeks and the troops numbering to only up to 50 is more than enough."

Defense officials had announced that the US military presence here could last from six months to a year.

"For Guingona, 600 American soldiers are already kind of an overkill. At least 50 American soldiers are enough to train the country's Armed Forces, who would eventually pass on to their men what they have learned," the source said.

The source said Guingona believes the Philippines was surrendering to the United States its national sovereignty by allowing hundreds of American soldiers to take the lead in ridding the country of local terrorists.

Guingona, he said, was instrumental to the ouster of the US bases here and allowing these bases to come back was just "unconscionable."

When asked if he was prepared to resign as DFA secretary once there will be a falling out during the meeting tomorrow, Guingona did not answer yes or no but, "Not yet."

Surprise

At the Cabinet meeting, Guingona did not even bother to raise his objections when Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes presented the controversial Balikatan "training exercises" in Zamboanga and Basilan.

The members of the Cabinet were surprised at the new seating arrangement.

Tiglao could not explain why Guingona no longer sat beside the President.

"All of us were surprised that there's a new seating arrangement. Maybe the one who arranged (the seats) didn't know the previous arrangement," he offered an explanation.

He told reporters not to make an issue out of it.

Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, who had sat to the President's left in all past meetings, occupied Guingona's seat.

Taking Romulo's place was Finance Secretary Jose Camacho.

Reyes sat three seats to the President's left.

In all past meetings, the President and her Cabinet occupied three tables arranged in a U-shape.

She sat at the head table with Guingona to her right and Romulo to her left.

But in yesterday's Cabinet meeting, they only occupied one table and sat facing each other.

Tiglao said Reyes again presented the details of the Mindanao Balikatan exercises to quell doubts about its alleged unconstitutional aspects.

"The Vice President didn't make any comment today, but that doesn't mean that he would not raise any issues in the National Security Council meeting (today)," he said.

"You can't say that just because (he) didn't make a statement there, that doesn't mean he's a wallflower.

"He was listening very closely and we respect the Vice President's views," he said.

Tiglao said that as far as he knows, no other Cabinet member shared Guingona's views.

"We're all hoping that he will continue to support the President's vision," Tiglao said in another interview in the afternoon.

DOJ: No deal yet, it's still under review

(From page A1)

of Foreign Affairs headed by Vice President Teofisto Guingona.

Guingona was one of the 12 senators who voted in 1991 against a treaty seeking to extend the stay of US military bases in the country.

The official said the MLSA was signed when Reyes met with Adm. Dennis Blair, commander in chief of the US Pacific Command, in Hawaii four weeks ago.

In a privilege speech the other day, Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos also claimed that the defense departments of the two countries had signed the MLSA.

The MLSA document, however, listed Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, and Blair as signatories, according to the senior official.

Villanueva denied that an agreement had been signed.

But he admitted that he signed a draft MLSA and submitted it for review by a government committee. It then must be approved by President Macapagal-Arroyo and signed by Villanueva and Blair to take effect.

Villanueva said a draft MLSA was still awaiting the signature of Guingona.

"The MLSA will not be in effect if the (foreign affairs) secretary will not sign it," Villanueva said over dzRH radio.

Villanueva and Perez disclosed the draft document amid controversy over the ongoing deployment of up to 660 American troops in Mindanao to advise their local counterparts on how to defent the Abu Sayyaf bandit group, which is holding an American couple and a Filipina nurse as hostages in Basilan.

Guingona has expressed reservations over the US military deployments, and is scheduled to meet with President Macapagal-Arroyo and other senior officials today. *(See related story.)*

The proposed agreement contains provisions "for the servicing, for the supply of their planes and troops, how they are going to be supported when they come here for training exercises and the like," Villanueva said.

"In other words, it is a support matter that will be there to help them when they come here. For example, when they dock (at a Philippine port), it contains provisions that require us to put in supplies, certain logistics installations to support them," the general said.

The spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines also denied that the MLSA had been signed.

Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said a Technical Working Group (TWG) was still reviewing the draft agreement.

After the TWG's review, the document will be forwarded to a committee composed of the secretaries of justice, defense and foreign affairs.

"This committee, headed by (Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes), will then forward it to the President for approval," Adan said.

"The chief of staff does not sign unless approved by Malacañang," Adan said.

First draft rejected

Perez said the first draft of the MLSA was not signed because it contained provisions that ran counter to Philippine interests.

"That was the reason why the first draft was not signed. It contained certain provisions that would have allowed the deployment of troops in the bases to check on US equipment even without the concurrence of the Philippine Senate. That could not be," Perez told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

The proposed MLSA was supposed to have been signed during Ms Macapagal's meeting with US President George W. Bush during Ms Macapagal's visit to Washington in November last year.

Perez said the United States had insisted that its personnel would not be combat personnel but technicians who would attend to their equipment. "They would still be troops of the United States," the justice secretary said.

Villanueva said the defense departments of the two countries, bound by a 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, negotiated the draft MLSA.

He dismissed speculation that the proposed accord would violate the Constitution, which bans the stationing of foreign troops or supplies on Philippine territory unless under a treaty.

He said the defense and justice departments had "discussed the legality" of the document "in all aspects—constitutionality, viability, and how it relates to the laws that we have here."

Perez said the new draft did not contain provisions that would violate the Constitution.

A copy of the draft, obtained by The Associated Press, says major weapon systems cannot be transferred. The United States also listed nuclear weapons, guided missiles, naval mines, torpedoes and chemical ammunition on the banned list.

Executive agreement

Perez told dzRH that the proposed accord would be in the form of an "executive agreement" as opposed to a treaty that would require the concurrence of the Senate.

"We have introduced certain corrections and concerns so that this agreement would conform to our laws," Perez added.

Adan defended the proposed MLSA, saying it will shorten procurement of supplies for Filipino troops.

"This is not a military operation, it is buying or selling of goods and services," Adan said.

He said that under the arrangement US forces would pay in "kind" for the food, gasoline and other items that they would need for the duration of their stay in the country.

"The question here is do we have another option other than the MLSA?" Adan said. He said the only other option would be for the Philippines to acquire equipment from the United States through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS).

"That is a more complicated matter . . . It is not really the best option. The MLSA provides a shortcut to the system," he added.

Adan said the proposed agreement would not involve the setting up of structures but merely "temporary" structures for supplies.

"When we talk of basing, we talk of the housing of a significant number of men or forces supposed to be engaged in a military type of operation," he said.

Representative Marcos had said that this could be the secret treaty that would pave the way for the reestablishment of US bases in the country.

Adan said that the MLSA "goes beyond Balikatan (joint military exercises)."

He said the agreement would apply only if one of the three conditions were met. The conditions include a military operation being conducted under the Mutual Defense Treaty and a United Nations-sanctioned operation "agreed upon by governments of both parties."

In the House of Representatives, Negros Occidental Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada Jr., chair of the House committee on foreign affairs, said his committee would ask the defense and foreign affairs departments and Malacañang to produce the draft of the MLSA.

Question hour

Lozada also asked Speaker Jose de Venecia to convene a "Question Hour" during which the defense secretary and the AFP chief of staff would be asked to explain the document.

Lozada also said the House committee would conduct on Jan. 29 an investigation of the presence of US troops in the country. Guingona has confirmed his attendance in the hearing.

Lozada said Reyes, Villanueva, Perez, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez would also be asked to attend the hearing.

Eleven congressmen, including Lozada, filed a resolution seeking the investigation, saying the presence of US troops in the country is unconstitutional.

With reports from AP and AFP

Veep swamped with mixed advice

(From page A1)

Guingona is against the presence of US troops in the country and has hinted at resigning as foreign secretary.

The Junk VFA(Visiting Forces Agreement) Movement extolled Guingona as the last patriot left standing in the Macapagal administration.

The group urged Guingona to "remain steadfast in his principled stand against US intervention in internal affairs."

Retired Navy Capt. Danilo Vizmanos, Junk VFA Movement spokesperson, said Guingona "should be a paragon to the cabal of US puppets in the Cabinet and the entire government."

"Guingona's star shines brightest today in the midst of the grim puppetry demonstrated by Malacañang and the military establishment," Vizmanos said.

Compromise

But Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez asked Guingona to play along with the Macapagal administration.

"The best thing the Vice President should do is to compromise. He's part of the administration, he should be a team player," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez, a stalwart of the ruling party Lakas-NUCD, said Guingona should set aside his personal feelings and cooperate with the President who appointed her as her foreign secretary.

"This matter (American presence) has become a very emotional issue. We should think with our minds as well as with our hearts," Gonzalez said.

"We have to look at this on the basis of our laws and also our treaty commitments including with the United Nations," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez maintains that the "Balikatan" joint-military exercises in Basilan, where some 600 US troops are participating, are constitutional as these are allowed under the Visiting Forces Agreement.

"Every act is presumed constitutional until proclaimed otherwise and I believe that presumption should stay," he said.

A militant group urged Guingona to quit the Cabinet.

"We hope the Vice President sees the light that leaving Ms Macapagal and her company of wolves and joining the national rage against the deployment of US troublemakers is an honorable deed," the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said.

Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon said it was time for Guingona to make an open break with the President.

"The Vice President should let go of his partisan affiliation and uphold the interest of the Filipino people," Sambajon said.

He said Guingona should live up to his name as a fierce opponent of US military presence in the country.

As a senator, Guingona voted against extending the stay of US military bases and troops in the country in 1991. He also voted "no" to the VFA in 1999.

A former senator who joined Guingona in rejecting the US bases in 1991 appealed to the Vice President's sense of nationalism.

Think of Ka Tanny

"I hope you have a dim recollection of me. On Sept. 16, 1991, you and 11 others in the Senate voted no on the bases. We voted then partly on the basis of national pride, a value we treasured when all of us in Mabini (a lawyer's group) spoke with a single voice on human rights and nationalism. Think of Ka Tanny (the late senator Lorenzo Tañada) and Ka Pepe (the late senator Jose Diokno)," former Sen. Rene Saguisag said in a statement.

"The 1991 vote went unmarked during its 10th anniversary and might have indicated what the administration thought of our Vote. (The only thing some people remember was that last year President Macapagal-Arroyo used her powers to rename Clark after her father, when a law passed by Congress would have been the after expression of the national will.)," Saguisag added.

"The Americans, they say, will only fire in self-defense but some of them may believe that the best defense is offense. And after they leave, assuming they will ever leave during the balance of the President's term, who will pick up the pieces as we deal with a problem that has defied solution for centuries?

"We wish you a good year and a long life, and pray that you will not lose your way by going by the fixed star that we have all gone by in terms of belief in the capability of the Filipino. Yes, we can and if you now reverse yourself, many of us will see in it the poignancy of a recantation. Pity. Shall we go *na*!? Do not be a Guingona *Din*," Saguisag said.

Vizmanos also appealed to Guingona's patriotism.

"We are proud of your principled stand and we expect nothing less from someone with a track record of patriotism in military, economic and political affairs."

Don't despair

"We understand the agony because it is hard to work with puppets and running dogs of the US. It is impossible to advance Philippine independence and self-reliance when the Malacañang dogma is unabashed puppetry to the US. But, Mr. Vice President, do not despair because the people are behind you," Vizmanos said.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan urged the country's leaders to "follow Guingona's fine example" and join him in "shedding light on the true nature and intention of the combat operations to be undertaken by 650 US troops."

"Are there other patriots in government aside from Guingona? It's about time they take a stand against this clear intervention in our affairs," said Teodoro Casiño, Bayan secretary general.

Casiño said the House and Senate should immediately conduct an inquiry into the matter and summon Malacañang and defense officials.

In a forum at Hotel Rembrandt on Monday, former Sen. Wigberto Tañada said the Macapagal administration should explain to the public the real extent, scope and intent of the activities of US troops in Mindanao.

Tañada expressed concern that "the public is left in the dark by the government on this issue. It is about time for matters to be clarified especially since many important factors are at stake."

House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla said he would endorse a resolution filed by Bayan Muna representatives calling for an inquiry into the entry of the US forces.

Idolatry

In the forum, leaders of the country's two biggest Protestant churches spoke against the President's "idolatry of foreign gods" and asked her to "repent and turn back from evil ways of actively seeking US meddling in Philippine affairs."

Sharon Rose Joy Ruiz Duremdez of the National Council of Churches of the Philippines (NCCP) reiterated the council's "strong objections to foreign military interference." She dubbed the upcoming US combat operations as "immoral and un-Christian."

Datu Michael Mastura of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front said his group was "joining those who are defending our territory against interference by any country."

"This might become hazardous to peace because Bangsamoro land may be affected, including several areas in Basilan," he said.

For his part, Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran urged Guingona to speak his mind against the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) and the joint Kalayaan-Aguila 2002 combat operations.

Beltran, chair of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno, said Guingona had his support and those of his peers in the militant movement.

"Vice President Guingona has already shown his nationalism and patriotic fervor when he voted against the Visiting Forces Agreement in 1999. He also showed strength of character when he stood up and accused former President Joseph Estrada of being a gambling lord in 2000," Beltran said.

"He should once more exhibit all this qualities and stand up against the Macapagal administration and the military," he added.

Beltran claimed that Guingona should not feel that he owed the President because he was an appointee.

"Guingona's loyalty should be first and foremost to the Filipino people, whose welfare is being sorely undermined by the Macapagal administration," he said.

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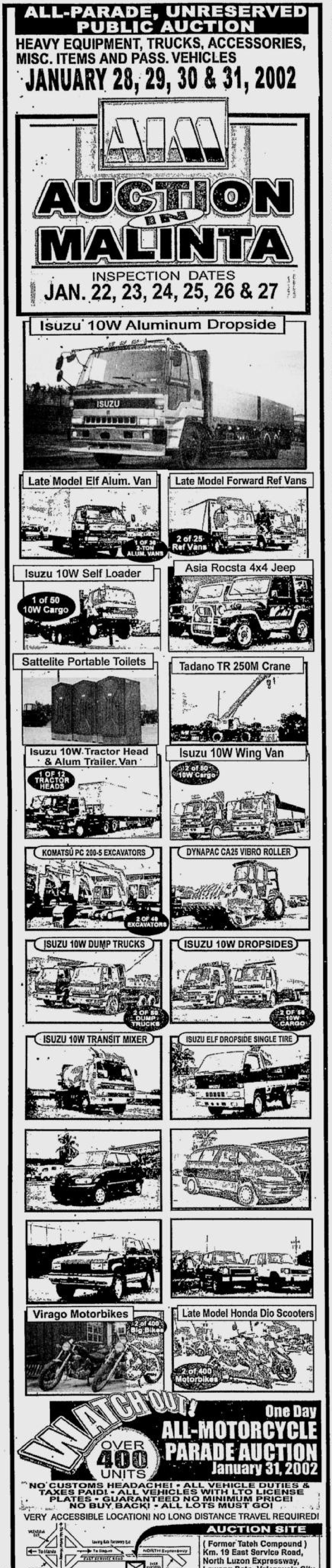
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Carrion declines PSC post, recommends Muslim golfer

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE Sports Commissioner Cynthia Carrion yesterday said she turned down the position of PSC chair and next presented Eric Buhain, King Yabut and Saleh Duma as candidates for the position to President Arroyo.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Carrion said she could not handle the job of PSC chair because of "too many outside forces and intrigues."

She also recommended the retention of Commissioners Richie Garcia and Butch Ramirez but not Commissioner Weena Lim.

Ramirez resigned yesterday, a day after Butch Tuason resigned as PSC chair.

Buhain was a star swimmer, Yabut a scion of a political clan headed by the late Nemesio Yabut and Duma is a Muslim sports leader.

"The longer I stay in the PSC, the more I'm convinced that it's not easy to be the PSC chair," said Carrion.

She joked: "There is politics, pressure and press."

Buhain, who became a household name in 1991 when he won seven gold medals in the Southeast Asian Games, said he would be happy to serve in the PSC.

Buhain has been very vocal in exposing alleged "injustices against national athletes."

"If the President tells me to jump I will do it," Buhain told the INQUIRER. "But I have to wait for the word because I have too much respect for Chairman Tuason."

Lydia de Vega-Mercado, one-time Asia's sprints queen, is also among the contenders for commissioner, according to sources.

Duma is a golf official based in Marawi City, while Yabut once served as an official of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines.

Carrion, the only appointee of the Ms Arroyo, was locked in a marathon meeting with Garcia and commissioner Weena Lim at presstime.

CARRION

YABUT

BUHAIN

Tuason bade farewell to the sports media yesterday.

Garcia said he was surprised that Tuason resigned. He said the former PSC chief "didn't consult anyone of us."

But the commissioner from Bacolod, the hometown of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, said he had a falling out with Tuason "due managerial differences" before Tuason called it quits Monday.

'I want to spare family from intrigues'

TUASON

RESIGNED Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Tuason yesterday said he gave up his post to spare the First Family from further intrigues and criticisms.

"Relentless insinuations and criticisms being hurled at me reflected at the First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, who is my cousin," said Tuason. "Even President Arroyo herself is being affected regardless if the charges don't have any basis."

Tuason said he arrived at the decision last December.

"It was last December when I was playing golf with the First Family and I noticed how these negative reports affected them," said Tuason. "I don't want to further burden them by staying in the office one minute longer."

"I don't regret being part of the (President's) family," added Tuason, who stressed that the President's first administrative order to rid the government with people related to her doesn't include people who have been holding the position prior to her assumption as president. Tuason, who even led the PSC's strategic meeting in Baguio last weekend, was PSC chair for three years and seven months.

Tuason has been under fire from the Alliance of Coaches and Athletes of the Philippines, which filed three graft charges against him before the Ombudsman and the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

Acap officials even staged a protest rally in front of the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex asking for his ouster. The move culminated with a meeting with the President after the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games.

The last straw, according to Tuason, was when he was listed No. 5 in the Hall of Shame by the Philippine Consultative Assembly late last year.

"Don't make the same mistakes that I made, keep a good rapport with the athletes," advised Tuason to his would-be successor during his farewell press conference yesterday.

Tuason, who submitted his courtesy resignation last Jan. 17, said the person who would replace him must put the athletes ahead of everybody else. However, Tuason said he will stay put until his replacement was named though there are still no word from Malacañang yet.

"I tried to do the best I can but I can never satisfy everybody," said Tuason. "I had my shortcomings but I had my strong points and help improve lives of people here in Rizal Memorial."

The 55-year-old Tuason added he will go back to his gun manufacturing business and continue playing golf and hunting.

Marc Reyes

Dayrit: Tuason victim of politics

PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit yesterday said resigned Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Tuason was a "victim of politics which is slowly killing Philippine sports."

Dayrit said Tuason was a loss to the country's sports development program even as he maintained Tuason's resignation "won't affect the country's preparation for the Busan Asian Games in September."

Said Dayrit: "The Asian Games is still months away and we still have time to get to know the next chairman," Dayrit told the INQUIRER. "But definitely, we'll be working closely with the one who will be appointed."

The POC chief said he can relate to the outgoing PSC head because he's also a target of politics himself.

Like Tuason, Dayrit said he gets criticisms every now and then.

"PSC officials work at the pleasure of the President," said Tuason. "That's what separates us from them. But I'm sure the President will be naming an able replacement."

DAYRIT

Dayrit said the Asian Games Task Force, a joint venture by the POC and the PSC, will have to wait for the appointment of the new chair before it could push through with its work to determine the composition of the national delegation.

Marc Anthony Reyes

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1989, Donald Padilla shot 576 points to rule the rapid fire pistol event in the shooting eliminations for the Southeast Asian Games at the NRPA range in Quezon City. Also today in 1992, Alex Pascual scored a 237-235 win over Dave Elizalde to claim the Bowler of the Year title at the Rizal Bowling Club in Cainta.

Cebu to host nat'l lifting tilt Feb. 3-7

THE PHILIPPINE Weightlifting Association (PWA) will hold its National Open championships on Feb. 3-7 at the Cebu City Sports Complex.

Competition will be conducted in the men's and women's divisions, according to Rodones Sicat, who is recognized by the Philippine Olympic Committee as PWA president.

Participants will compete in 10 levels. These are: Men - Open (no age limit), junior (19-20 years old), youth (18 and below), collegiate (for college students) and secondary (for high school students).

Women - Open (no age limit), junior (19-20 years old), youth (18 and below), collegiate (for college students) and secondary (for high school students).

Boysen bags Ejercito Cup

BOYSEN Paints added another trophy to its growing collection after drubbing reigning National Open champion Spring Cooking Oil-Oishi, 70-56, recently to capture the 2001-2002 MBL-J.V. Ejercito Cup Basketball Tournament title at the San Juan gym.

Five players—Lito Saygo, Jhun Mendinilla, Cesar Rivera, Marvin Mercado and Theody Habelito—provided the spark for Boysen, which needed two long scoring splurges early in the second half to pull away for good and complete the lopsided win over Spring-Oishi.

Thus Boysen, which is handled by coach Rex Manansala and team manager Ma. Victoria Chan, wrapped up the title with a clean 2-0 sweep of their best-of-three title showdown.

Chan, Manansala and assistant coaches Rex Armojallas, Nhoel de la Rosa and Genaro Ledesma received the championship trophy from San Juan Mayor J.V. Ejercito and Millennium Basketball League (MBL) president Elias Ang.

Also present during the awarding ceremony were San Juan councilor Dante Santiago, project director George Palaran and commissioner Vic Bartolome.

Saygo, who was named most valuable player of the tournament, topscored for Boysen with 14 points while Medenilla, Rivera, Mercado and Habelito added 10 points apiece.

Joel Co paced Spring-Oishi with 12 points followed by Ricky Ricafuente with nine points while Carlo Espiritu and Mike Buendia had seven points apiece.

Santiago emerges M-Racers Cup overall champion

DARWIN Santiago clinched the overall title in the recent M-Racers Invitational Cup held at the Pool Side, Skyland Plaza, Makati City.

Santiago, representing Team Wowow, bested the 113-man field to pocket the top purse of P3,000 and take home the championship trophy in the tournament sponsored and organized by GameworX president Jesus "Jun" Avecilla.

Efren Macatangay of Team G finished first runner-up and earned P2,000, while Mer Jiongco of Kolat Racing Team settled for second runner-up and P750. Other entries were from E-Racers, M-Racers and Roadsters.

Why athletes wait and worry

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THE TRUTH is finally out. The long-suffering Filipino athletes who won medals in international competitions will have to wait and worry as to when they will get their cash rewards under the provisions of Republic Act 9064 also known as "Sports Benefits and Incentives Act of 2001" because there is no money available at the moment.

Former PSC Commissioner and now Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella who chairs the House Committee on Games and Sports said in a faxed letter, "I am saying this with all candor so that all those who are hoping to benefit from this law may soon face the truth and not live on false hopes." Briefly, here's my longtime friend Monico:

"Let me first commend you for the continuing crusade you have pursued for our beloved national athletes. There are two main issues that you have raised concerning me in relation to my position in Congress.

"First is Republic Act 9064 and second the financial assistance of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp to the Philippine Sports Commission.

"On your first concern, it is appropriate at this time to inform you and all those concerned that we have mixed feelings about this law. While the lawmakers who saw through its passage have a noble purpose by addressing the problems of athletes, sadly it may not be implemented because of lack of funding.

Aside from other various incentives granted to the beneficiary-athletes, Pagcor is also required to allot no less than P100 million to the PSC as seed money alone and we all know what our financial situation is right now. Aside from this, there are other major obstacles to its implementation which we shall discuss among other things in our next congressional inquiry this week.

"I am saying this with all candor so that all those who are hoping to benefit from this law may soon face the truth and not live on false hopes. The problem regarding the athletes' incentives is merely the tip of the iceberg. This is the sad reality my dear friend.

"Keep up the good work and God bless."

* * *

WARNING TO THE PUBLIC. Beck Garcia, indefatigable president of the POC-recognized Dance Sport Council of the Philippines, is warning ballroom dancing enthusiasts about the unauthorized activities of another group which is claiming to be the legitimate body for dance in the Philippines.

Becky said this "colorum" group is simply being used by an Australian coach who has been "kicked out" of his country. At present, Becky stressed, this unwanted Aussie is conducting workshops in Metro Manila and the provinces, practicing his trade in the Philippines without a working permit.

This is something that the authorities should investigate. Like in the case of the controversial Fil-American basketball players, the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation and the Games and Amusements Board should seriously look into the illegal activities of this Aussie. If found guilty, he should be sent back to Australia where he belongs.

* * *

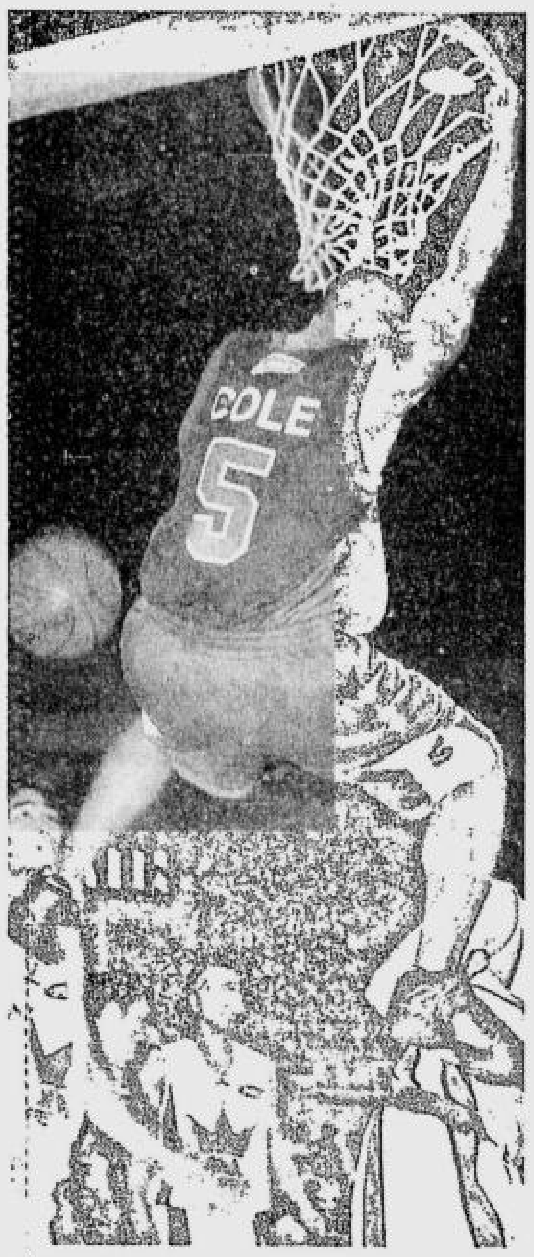
MALONSO SAYS. Sports critique and former POC president Col. Julian Malonso said it was a clear case of "government intervention" when PSC Commissioner Cynthia Carrion showed "bias" by inducting into office officers of an opposition tennis group led by Jovy Mamawal recently. Not only that, Malonso added, Carrion's action will only embarrass her classmate, President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is herself under fire for her short appearance in the recent PSA Award Night. The short appearance, Malonso said "shows how much interest she has for sports."

The newspapers, according to Malonso, attributed GMA's presence to Cynthia. "In other words," Malonso stated, "GMA went to the PSA awards not at her own volition, she was just forced and stayed for a short period, which is worse than if she did not appear at all.

"But GMA had time to play (golf) with Delasin (Dorothy Delasin, who was voted the PSA Female Athlete of the Year), who is not a Filipino citizen. What a hypocrisy."

CHALLENGE CUP

Shark, Kutitap make semis



CLARENCE COLE of Shark hangs on to the rim after a dunk. BETOY JOHNSON

BY DENNIS U. EROA

GAMES TOMORROW (Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—ICTSI vs Shark Energy
5:30 p.m.—Welcoat vs Kutitap

TITLEHOLDER Shark Energy Drink and Kutitap Toothpaste downed their respective foes last night to enter the semifinals of the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Center Irvin Sotto, thrust into the limelight with the shaky showing of veteran Rysal Castro, and rookie Ismael Junio delivered the telling blows as Shark proved steadier in the end game with an 80-69 win over Ana Freezers.

Kutitap played merciless in routing Blu Detergent Kings, 81-61, in the second game.

Shark and Kutitap advance to the crossover semifinals starting Thursday against ICTSI-La Salle and bemedalled Welcoat Paints, respectively. By finishing 1-2 at the end of the double round eliminations, Welcoat and ICTSI-La Salle enjoy the twice-to-beat incentive.

Sotto and Junio's snipings proved too hot for the Freezer Kings to handle. The 6-foot-7 Sotto escaped with 23 points, while Junio, lucky not to be called with a travelling violation by the referee in the final 1:30 of play, drained a crucial trey which zapped Ana's energy, 74-67.

"As I expected, Ana gave us a tough fight," said Shark coach Leo Austria."This win will lift our spirits going into the semifinals."

Despite not getting big games from PBA-bound Chester Tolomia and Gilbert Malabanan, the Energy Drink Kings surged ahead, 51-41, but Dondon Mendoza and Roland Pascual joined hands as the Freezer Kings deadlocked the game, 57-57, early in the fourth quarter.

With Warren Ybañez directing the plays, Shark kept Ana at bay. Ana last threatened at 71-67 on Pascual's two gift shots, but Junio sank the big three right in front of Ana coach Rudy Mendoza, who raised a howl claiming that the Shark gunner was guilty of an infraction.

To the surprise of the sizeable crowd, Kutitap strolled to victory against a sluggish Blu side. Nino Gelig, Wesley Gonzales, Allan Salangsang and Rency Bajar starred as the Sparklers never relinquished a 21-8 first quarter bubble.

SCORES:

SHARK 80—Sotto 23, Junio 14, Ybañez 12, Tolomia 11, Cole 6, Ortega 6, Castro 6, Basilides 2, Robinson 0, Malabanan 0, Rodriguez 0.

ANA 69—D. Mendoza 24, Pascual 21, Tubid 10, Capus 4, Vilar 4, Artadi 4, Chavez 2, Mendoza 0, De Guzman 0.

Quarters: 15-17, 39-31, 56-50, 80-69

Hornets clobber Knicks

NEW YORK—The New York Knicks were embarrassed in their most-lopsided home loss ever, falling to the Charlotte Hornets 111-68 Monday for their eighth straight defeat.

By the end of the game, which saddled the Knicks with their longest losing streak in 15 years, several players on the bench had towels covering their heads. The Knicks' previous worst home defeat was a 132-93 rout by Miami on April 10, 1987.

Baron Davis scored 24 points and pulled down nine rebounds despite not playing in the fourth quarter. Davis Wesley and Lee Nailon scored 16 points each while Elden Campbell added 13 points, Jamaal Magloire had 12 and Bryce Drew 10 for the Hornets.

Latrell Sprewell was scoreless on 0-for-9 shooting as the Knicks were held to their lowest point total of the season. New York shot a season-worst 30 percent.

COMPLETE RESULTS

Hornets 111, Knicks 68; Bucks 97, Pistons 79; Hawks 95, Rockets 91; Sonics 109, Sixers 98; Jazz 101, Warriors 99; Pacers 93, Bulls 81; Celtics 106, Raptors 97; Heat 95, Cavaliers 93, OT; Timberwolves 105, Wizards 101; Mavericks 113, Nets 105; Kings 112, Grizzlies 98; Clippers 102, Nuggets 89. *AP*

SPORTSWATCH

Hingis enters semifinals

MELBOURNE, Australia—Martina Hingis advanced to the Australian Open semifinals Tuesday by winning her hardest match of the tournament, one in which she dropped five games to unheralded Italian Adriana Serra Zanetti. Hingis beat 83rd-ranked Serra Zanetti 6-2, 6-3, and now has lost just 14 games in five matches, an average of 1.4 per set. In the subsequent match on center court, Thomas Johansson, seeded 16th, advanced to his first semifinal at a Grand Slam with a 6-0, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 victory over fellow Swede Jonas Bjorkman, who had ousted No. 6 Tim Henman, No. 12 Guillermo Canas and No. 24 Thomas Enqvist. Late Monday, Marat Safin ousted Pete Sampras, 6-2, 6-4, 6-7 (5-7), 7-6 (8-6), to enter the men's quarterfinals. *AP*

St. Benilde routs JRU

JOHN Rey Moreno and Borgy Zoleta led College of St. Benilde's 3-0 rout of Jose Rizal University yesterday at the start of the National Collegiate Athletic Association tennis tournament at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Moreno stamped his class over Hercules Aguanta, 6-2, 6-1, in the doubles. Zoleta downed Vicencio, 8-3, to complete the win. Earlier, San Sebastian College banked on Nino Salvador and John Amita to demolish University of Perpetual Help-Rizal, 3-0. Salvador won the first singles over Dennis Canaria, 6-0, 6-1; Salvador and Amita dumped Canaria and John Motol, 6-1, 6-0, in the doubles; and Amita blasted Motol, 8-0, in the second singles. St. Benilde, San Sebastian and Letran won their opening-day games in the juniors division.

CSB dribblers advance

Games Today (Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
10 a.m.—Adamson vs St. Benilde (Srs.)
11:30 a.m.—Adamson vs St. Claire (Jrs.)
1 p.m.—La Salle-GH vs PCCR (Jrs.)
2:30 p.m.—Trinity vs Mapua (Jrs.)
4 p.m.—Jose Rizal vs RTU (Srs.)
5:30 p.m.—Mapua vs LPC (Srs.)

COLLEGE of St. Benilde stamped its class over St. Jude, 97-72, yesterday to secure a quarterfinal berth in the National Capital Region eliminations for the National Students Basketball championships at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. Sunday Salvacion topscored with 21points, including five triples, while Jondan Salvador and Dino Perlas chipped in nine points as the Blazers kept the Group B lead at 3-0.

World Slasher resumes

THE WORLD Slasher 8-Cock Derby resumes today with the continuation of the two-cock elimination round at the Araneta Coliseum. The early two-pointers, included former World Slasher champions Thunderbird-Firefly I of American Roger Roberts and Big Dome owner Nene Araneta, Firefly-Thunderbird 8 of Jun Santiago of the Firefly Group, Ram Lopez and Bobby Jones, and Jinfer of Pampanga's Jingco brothers and Jet Fernando, Spencer Winslet of Dicky Lim, Mountaineer, BPZ Sunshine of Boy Primallon, RT 114 Mapalad I of Edgar Santos, RSJ.Com of Sonny Lagon, Penny Saver of Pennie Fabros, BL USA Golden Aces of Boy Lechon, JBB Agilawin UMA of R. Montilla and Sonny Luis C & E Combine.

Pangasinan Youth Cycling

THE FIRST Pangasinan Invitational Youth Cycling Championships will be held this Sunday with a maximum of 60 riders competing. A project of the Pangasinan anti-drug abuse council (Padac), the 132-km race for riders who are 19 years or younger will start at Bugallon and end in Bolinao, traversing the province's western coastal towns. Dubbed Siklista Kontra Droga, the race is being supported by Gov. Victor Agbayani, Vice Gov. Oscar Lambino and PNP provincial director Col. Rodolfo Mendoza Jr. "We (riders have to start them young and get them away from drugs," said Mendoza. Race director Jess Garcia said a total of P33,000 will be at stake with the champion getting P6,000, the 2nd P4,000, 3rd P3,000, 4th P2,000 and 5th P1,000. The top three will also receive trophies. The race is sanctioned by the Philippine Amateur Cycling Association and the National Cycling Federation of the Philippines Inc.

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GAL Games slated Jan. 25

THE COLGATE-Palmolive Girls Athletic League (GAL Games) volleyball and cheerleading tournament opens Jan. 25 at the La Salle Greenhills gym. The tournament, popular in the '70s, '80s and '90s, is being revived by the La Sallian community. Supporting the event are the Student Affairs Coordinating Body (SACB), TeamAsia, Colgate Palmolive and LSGH's Alumni Association, according to La Salle Greenhills president Bro. Bernie Oca, FSC.

SPORTS

Al S. Mendoza, Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**, Assistant Editor

SPORTS ON TV Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

TENNIS: Australian Open at 8 a.m. on Sky Cable 29 and Home Cable 17

Hopman Cup 2002 - Spain vs Australia at 9 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

BASKETBALL: NBA - Phoenix Suns vs Milwaukee Bucks at 9 a.m. (r – 4:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.) on ESPN

US NCAA - Michigan State vs Iowa at 1 p.m., Virginia vs Georgia Tech at midnight, Kentucky vs Auburn tomorrow at 2:30 a.m., Cincinnati vs Saint Louis tomorrow at 5 a.m. on ESPN

WACK WACK BIG BASH

₱10M staked in 87th Philippine Open

It's back to APGA; Miñoza invited by Ben Abalos

GOLF bigwigs announce yesterday the holding of the 87th Casino Filipino Philippine Open during a press conference at Wack Wack in Mandaluyong City. From left are Aranda, Strachan, Harun, Abalos, Feliciano, Owen, Dizon and Gopez. ROMY HOMILLADA

THE 87TH Casino Filipino Philippine Open will be held March 7-10 at Wack Wack East, with Ben Abalos announcing yesterday of his dogged pursuit to lure Frankie Miñoza into Asia's oldest professional golfest.

Abalos, who co-chairs the Open's executive committee with Rod Feliciano, said, "It would be to the best interest of the country if Frankie (Miñoza) could join us in this year's Open."

Miñoza, who devotes most of his time playing in the dollar-rich Japan Tour, won the Philippine Open in 1998 at Riviera's Couples in Silang, Cavite.

"His appearance in the RP Open anew will surely add luster to our tournament, which will be supported strongly by both the private and the public sectors," said Abalos, the Wack Wack president who is also chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority.

Pagcor, represented yesterday by Rey Aranda, has initially pledged P5 million for the Open through the Casino Filipino.

SMB as presentor

Open presentor San Miguel Beer, with Charles Owen pitching in for the giant beer company, has initially committed P3 million through Danding Cojuangco.

Mel Dizon of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines said the car company will stake a car as a hole-in-one prize aside from pouring in close to P1 million to the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines "as our humble way of continuing our support for the fabled Open."

Cassius Casas will be back to defend his title but he will have to contend with a tougher opposition this time as the main wave of players from the Asian PGA (Professional Golfers Association) will be here.

The NGAP has acceded to rejoin the Asian PGA in a historic moment for Philppine golf, giving the nation's golfers bigger chances of winning more on the normally dollar-rich Asian Tour.

"We did it because we want our own pros to be exposed more to world-class competition while at the same time give them opportunities to earn more from the sport we all love," said Feliciano, the NGAP president. "With most of Asia's top pros sure to come, the skills of our own breed will again be put to a test. A strong competition will always result in quality play."

Winner gets P1.5M

The initial winner's purse is P1.5 million while the runner-up earns P1 million and the third-placer P.6 million.

Abalos played a major role in the return of the RP Open to the Asian Tour as he headed a high-powered delegation to Hong Kong in November to lay down the groundwork for it.

Joining Abalos in that delegation were, among others, Benny Gopez and S.P. Malbarosa, the RP Open's top honchos in the organizing committee. Bones Floro, Wack Wack golf director, was also in that trip.

"It is always nice to see our country being integrated into the Asian golfing mainstream," said Abalos. "The world has become too small for us that we need to move together as one, whether in golf or in another sphere of life."

Among those present during yesterday's press conference at Wack Wack were Ramlan Harum (executive director of the Asian PGA) and Justine Strachan (CEO of the Asian Tour Limited).

The NGAP board was also in attendance, among them Alice Andrada, Admiral Luisito Fernandez, Comm . Danny Pizarro, Vicente Santos and Taby Tabaniag.

Before Casas' victory last year at Wack Wack, Robert Pactolerin won it in 1990, also at Wack Wack when the RP Open was then part of the Asian Tour.

Last year's Top 5 in the Asian Order of Merit will join the RP Open, whose organizers have designated Mitsubishi as the official car.

The five are Thongchai Jaidee of Thailand (No. 1), Charlie Wi of South Korea, Andrew Pitts of the United States, Thaworn Wiratchant of Thailand and Arjun Atwal of India. *Al S. Mendoza*

FedEx gets Ren Ren for ₱9M

By Dennis U. Eroa

HOT-SHOOTING Ren Ren Ritualo yesterday became the newest member of the PBA young millionaires' club as he agreed to a P9-million, three-year contract excluding bonuses with newcomer FedEx.

The 22-year-old Ritualo, who for the second straight year gained the nod of the Philippine Sportswriters Association as top amateur basketball player, will receive the maximum rookie salary of P200,000 in his initial year. He will get P250,000 in the second year and P300.000 in the final year of his contract.

"I would like to thank the FedEx management headed by Mr. Bert Lina and Mr. Lito Alvarez for giving me the chance to play with FedEx," Ritualo told the INQUIRER.

Ritualo played a crucial role in the La Salle Green Archers' UAAP four-peat. While winning individual awards, Ritualo also lifted Welcoat Paints to four PBL titles.

With Ritualo's signing, FedEx now trains its sight on its top draft pick and Ritualo's teammate in Welcoat—6-foot-8 Yancy de Ocampo. After waiting for more than a week, De Ocampo and his handlers have already started negotiations with FedEx.

PMI seizes No. 3 spot

PHILIPPINE Maritime Institute spanked Emilio Aguinaldo College, 83-78, yesterday to claim the number three spot in the National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball Final Four at the Lyceum gym.

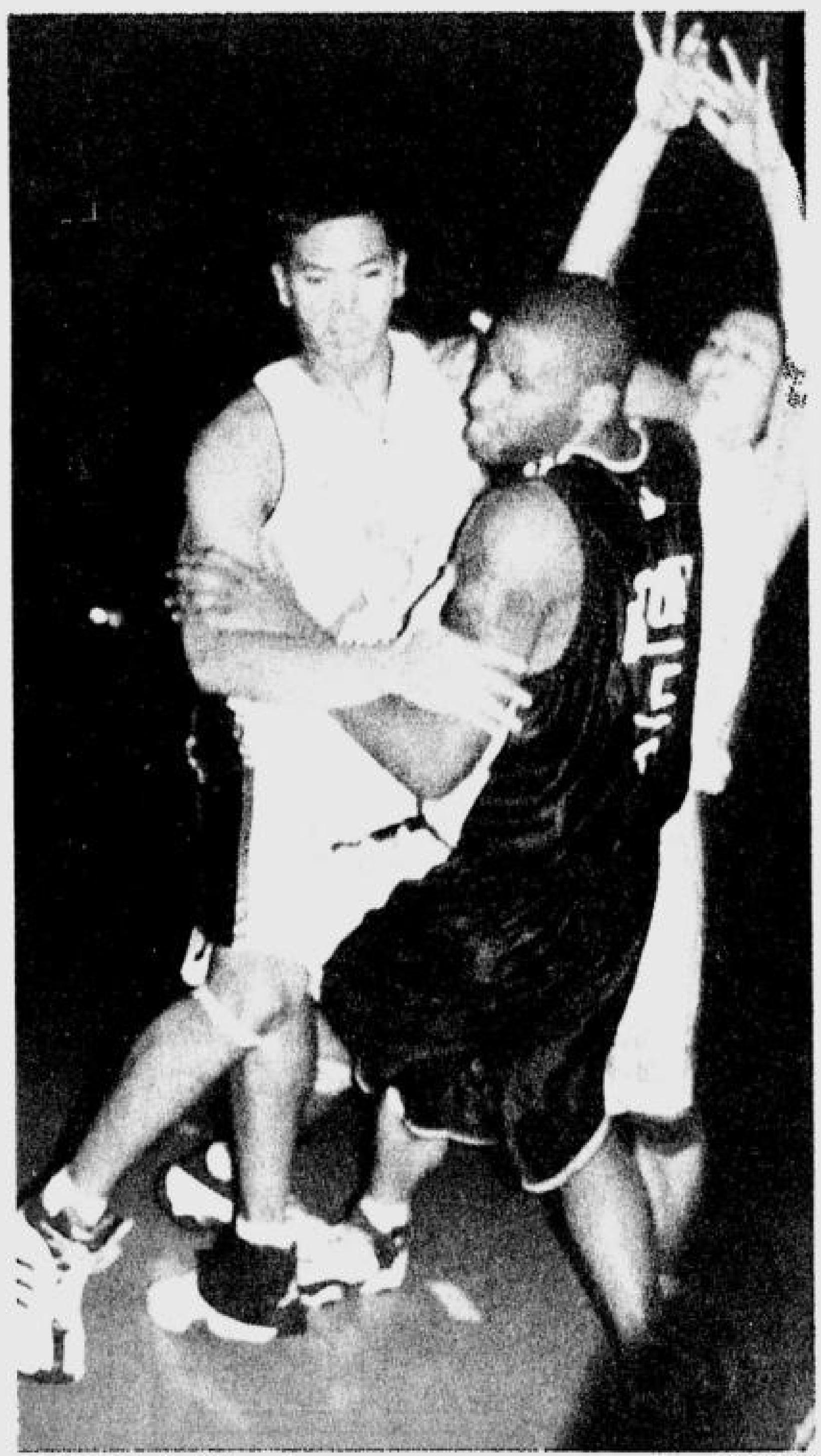
Nino Marquez and Carlo Altamirano fired 28 and 24 points, respectively, as the Mariners took their first crack of the semifinals under coach Dado Santiago with a 4-3 card.

The tournament is supported by Pagcor, DAR, Pepsi Cola, Mikasa Splash and Topnotch Trophies of Makati.

Meanwhile, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and defending champion De La Salle battle in a best-of-three final for the women's title at the Rizal Memorial Stadium on Thursday.

Class suit poised versus Tanduay

Pumaren, Realubit, Calimag back statements of Hawkins, Locsin



ADDUCUL (left) in action. FILE PHOTO

By Roy Luarca

AT least five players are now planning a class suit against Tanduay to force the Rhum Masters management to fulfill their part of the side contracts entered into by both sides in the PBA.

Dindo Pumaren, Zaldy Realubit and Ricky Calimag have decided to come out and corroborate the statements earlier aired by Bong Hawkins and Noli Locsin that their contracts with Tanduay have secret pacts on the side.

These deals are deemed illegal because Tanduay failed to attach it to the players' uniformed players contract as stipulated by PBA rules.

Player-agent Danny Espiritu said the class suit was an idea of the players, whom he advised not to act hastily as he feels that Tanduay would "open its doors to negotiations anytime soon."

Tanduay officials could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Espiritu added he tried to contact Basic Holdings, the team's franchise-holder before its slot was sold to Federal Express for P75 million, but none of its officials could be reached.

"We just want to explain to [Tanduay officials] that we don't want this issue to reach the courts. But at the same time, we want them to know that it's their fault that this controversy came out. If they did their job and if they were not negligent, this should never have happened," said Espiritu.

Tanduay only submitted the players' UPCs to the league, therefore Federal Express, which assumed the contracts of the players, has no legal obligation to honor the side contracts.

Espiritu added he is renegotiating with Federal Express regarding the buyout of the live pacts of Locsin and Hawkins. Locsin is eyeing a slot with the Red Bull Thunder, while Hawkins is considering a reunion with former Alaska teammates Johnny Abarrientos, Poch Juinio and Jeffrey Cariaso at Coca-Cola.

"They (FedEx) have proposed a 50 percent buyout of the contracts of the players. We're renegotiating and hoping that we could raise the price to at least 65 percent," said Espiritu

Meanwhile, Talk N Text's imports will be arriving today to begin practice with the Phone Pals. Former Ginebra import Jerrold Honeycutt will reinforce the team along with former Gonzaga standout Richie Frahm, a 6-5 guard who was once named the best shooter in the All-West Coast conference in the US National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Alaska will parade a rebounding demon in 1997 Continental Basketball Association top pick Muntrelle Dobbins.

The 6-foot-7, 26-year-old Dobbins will team up with *balik*-import Ron Riley, his former teammate at the Rockford Lightning in the CBA.

Dobbins was the Sun Belt Conference Player of the Year, Defensive Player of the Year and leading rebounder on his senior year at the University of Arkansas in 1996

Riley, 28, came back to the Aces' fold after seeing action during last year's Commissioner's Cup. The 6-foot-5 Arizona State alum brought the Aces to the quarterfinals.

Sta. Lucia Realty landed NBA veteran Johnny Taylor in lieu of Damien Owens, whose asking price was too stiff. The 6-foot-9 Taylor, the Orlando Magic's first-round pick (17th overall) in 1997-98, played for the Magic on that year. He will pair with 6-foot-3 Lelan Mcdougal.

Purefoods hired the services of Lenard White and Derrick Brown for added prowess while Barangay Ginebra took David Vaughn and Bubba Wells under its wings.

Batangas, Adducul part ways

THE LBC Batangas Blades have finally decided to part ways with franchise player Romel Adducul.

Santi Araneta, chair of the Multi-Regional Basketball Inc. and team owner of the Blades, the 2001 MBA national titlist, said they are ready to trade Adducul to any other team in the four-year-old league.

Problem is other MBA teams may be hard put to assume Adducul's multimillion, two-year contract with the Blades. The 6-foot-6 Adducul is reportedly receiving at least P500,000 a month plus other perks.

"With his (Adducul) talent, of course, there are lots of teams interested in getting his services," said Araneta. "But because of his maximum salary, teams interested in getting his services are thinking twice."

Araneta, who was guest in the PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn Manila, with newly appointed MBA commissioner Chito Loyzaga and business and marketing director Mon Tuason, also cited Adducul's inclusion to the national training pool for the Asian Games as a hindrance.

Tuason, for his part, said the TPG-Davao Eagles have sent feelers to acquire Adducul, the 2000 MBA MVP.

"Davao has indicated its intention of getting Adducul through a letter to commissioner Loyzaga. But there is no finality because we have not talked to Davao management yet.

Adducul, who's been coveted by nine PBA teams, had earlier expressed preference to play for the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems.

In another development, Allan Trinidad, officer-in-charge of MBA returnee Pampanga, said they would want to change their moniker from Dragons to Stars when the league starts on April 6.

Trinidad also confirmed that they are planning to get Ato Agustin as assistant coach-player. Agustin powered the Dragons to the national title in the MBA inaugurals in 1998. *Roy Luarca*

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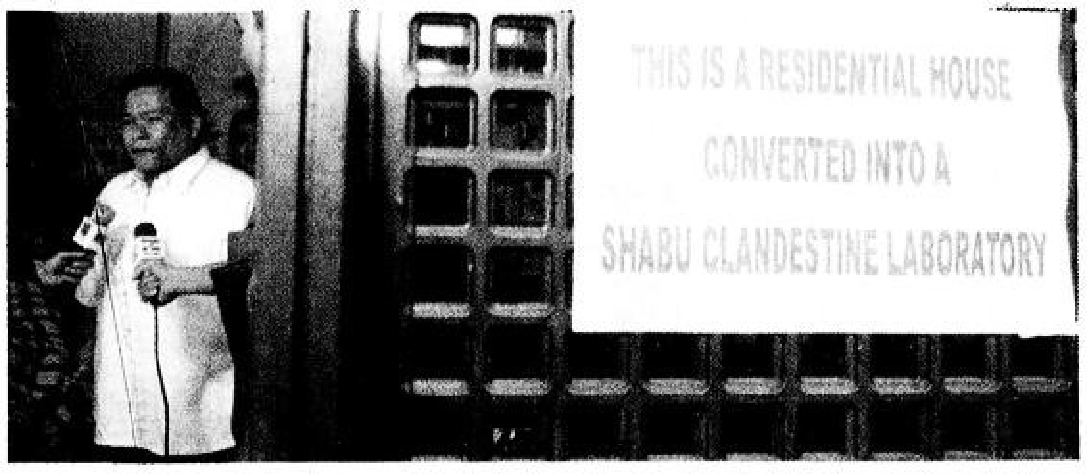
METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

■ Bare Eye: Basketball pointers from Acapulco A26
■ Dusit Hotel skinheads locked out A26
■ Furious vendors threw Munti grenade--cops A26

Bomb scare, thieves hit senators



DRUG DEN
San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito talks to media in the house on Araullo Street where police last Friday found a shabu lab and arrested seven technicians. He protested that the raiders made it appear San Juan was "the center of illegal drug trade in Metro Manila," but the PNP chief said the operation was "about drugs, not politics."
JOAN BONDOC

BY CYNTHIA D. BALANA
AND CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

SEN. John Osmeña's Toyota Land Cruiser was stolen in front of Edsa Shangri-La Plaza Monday night.

Yesterday morning, it was the turn of the other senators to feel "fear" when a K-9 dog on routine check for explosives refused to leave a black plastic bag it found in the basement parking area of the Senate building in Pasay City.

The plastic bag yielded no explosives, investigators said.

Osmeña said his driver of two years, Eddie Batian, parked his Land Cruiser, with protocol Plate No. 7, in front of the Edsa Shangri-La hotel

BOMB SCARE/ A26

WAZZZZUP? ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

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Cowboy Grill BRGY. ALMANZA, LAS PIÑAS	SERSIDE ICE KENDI	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 801.7644
Cowboy Grill 1190 ARQUEZA ST., MARINI	HOMOSAPIENS KNIGHTS/JAMM EDGE	NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy Grill 411 REMEDIOS ST., MALATE	SWEETBLOOD FREEZE	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 521.8143
Cowboy Grill NOVALICHES Q.C.	PARTY-Z-POLE ZYNAXIS/HIMIG	☎ 936.9757
Friends @ the square ST. FRANCIS SQ. ORTIGAS CENTER	ESCAPE	☎ 635.0279
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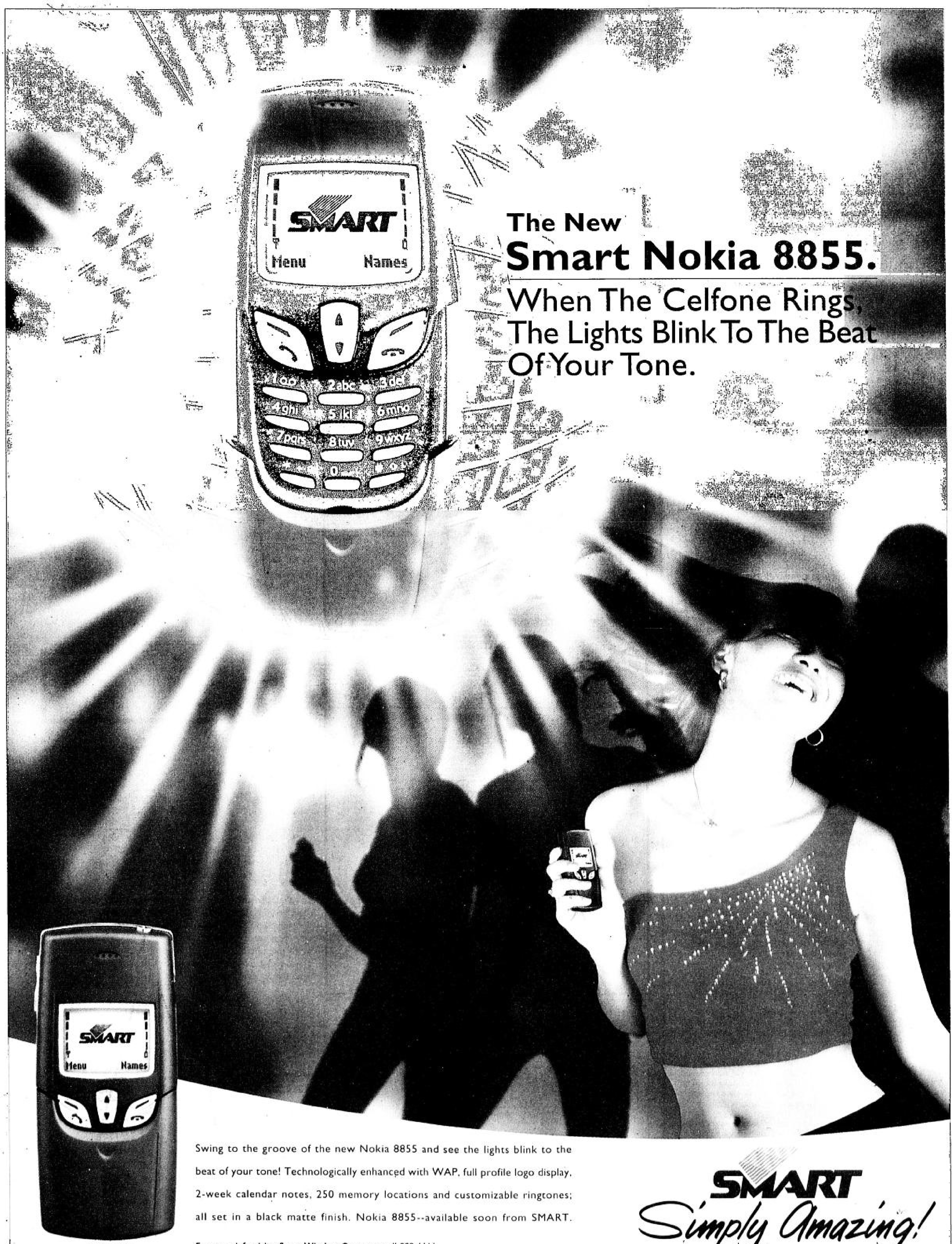

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MESSAGES

Office of the President
Malacanan Palace, Manila

It is with great pride and pleasure that I convey my warmest felicitations to the officers and members of the **Philippine Association of Water Districts, Inc. (PAWD)** as they hold their 23rd National Convention.

This event with the theme, "Water Districts: Rising Above Natural, Environmental and Financial Challenges," underscores the indispensable service of providing potable drinking water to millions of Filipinos along the countryside. That is why much of the praise go to PAWD for its continuing guidance of our country's water districts, particularly in the identification of sources of water. The delivery of this essential commodity on a daily basis is a gargantuan task but the PAWD has proven itself capable of overcoming such a challenge through the successful management of our country's precious water resources.

Water districts elevate the quality of life in communities and localities by providing safe and affordable water services to consumers. Our people must be adequately provided with this basic need as a vital step to promote the progress of their community and the entire nation. I encourage PAWD to take this opportunity to intensify its commitment in promoting the quality of life of our people.

I therefore call on PAWD to do its own share in building the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous year ahead of us. I hope the revival of our economy and the restoration of good governance will contribute to the expeditious delivery of basic services to more of our people.

I wish the success of your convention. MABUHAY!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

LOCAL WATER UTILITIES ADMINISTRATION
Balara, Quezon City

It is with utmost enthusiasm that I convey my warmest felicitations and heartfelt greetings to the esteemed members of this vibrant organization - the Philippine Association of Water Districts, Inc. on the occasion of holding its 23rd Convention.

The theme "Water Districts Rising Above Natural, Environmental and Financial Challenges" reflects the WD's unwavering dedication in maintaining and upgrading its water supply facilities and continuing commitment to provide affordable and quality water service to the people even in times of crises. This occasion will be the venue that will turn those challenges into opportunities for WDs to set up strategic directions towards living up to the vision of developing self-reliant local water utilities to serve communities nationwide.

This convention is relevant as it sustains our continuing thirst to invigorate the water industry and to provide adquate water supply to the people. I welcome this even therefore, as an opportunity to set all endeavors towards the theme.

Have a meaningful convention and a fruitful year ahead of you. My profound congratulations to you all.

FRANCISCO D. DUMPIT
Chairman, LWUA Board of Trustees

LOCAL WATER UTILITIES ADMINISTRATION
Balara, Quezon City

My warm congratulations to the Philippine Association of Water Districts for its 23rd National Convention.

The Local Water Utilities Administration and the water districts have been together since the inception of the then innovative LWUA-water district concept in 1973. It was indeed a long and hard climb up but the partnership persisted and have emerged triumphant at the end. Until now, almost three decades after, no other concept in water supply development could challenge its effectiveness and applicability to the Philippine setting. Success stories abound in the more than 400 operational water districts nationwide.

If only LWUA is not financially constrained, many more provinical areas could experience a dramatic turn-around in their water utilities. We know a big percentage of the countryside population have yet to experience the benefits of a water-district managed system. We are doing what we can do to respond to the challenge and we are confident the leadership of PAWD will also be there to support us.

LORENZO H. JAMORA
Administrator, Local Water Utilities Administration

PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF WATER DISTRICTS, INC.
Balara, Quezon City

It is both my pride and honor to congratulate all the officers and members of our beloved association—the Philippine Association of Water Districts, Inc. (PAWD) as we convene on January 22-25, 2002 at Cebu City for our 23rd National Convention.

We are living witnesses to the overwhelming events of the preceding year. We saw an abrupt change in our democracy as new leaders were installed promising an efficient and effective government for Filipinos. Also, we were terrified by gruesome terrorist attacks on capitalism that affected not only our national economy but also the security of our precious water resources.

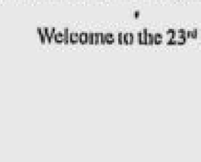
Eventually, these events were transformed into added challenges on the operation and management of the water districts. It is however, high time to get back on our feet and once again move forward and refresh our spirits as we continue our service to the community. In the face of these changes and challenges, it is inevitable for all of us to continue our education and exploration of newer trends, latest technologies and appropriate techniques that would steer the water districts to greater progress and development.

The learning experiences that we will gather and our renewed camaraderie through this conference should serve as our inspiration to keep on with our mandate of providing our people with adequate, potable and affordable water today and in the years to come. We hope that this will be another meaningful and fruitful convention to all of us.

Welcome to the 23rd PAWD National Convention! Mabuhay!

DANIEL P. FANDINO, JR.
Chairman, Board of Governors
Phil. Association of Water Districts, Inc

PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF WATER DISTRICTS, INC.
Balara, Quezon City



It is with great pleasure that I greet all my colleagues in the water industry as we, once more, converge as one big family.

Bringing safe and potable water to the Filipinos to the countryside is a Herculean task and this Convention provides us the opportunity to discuss issues, exchange ideas, offer solutions and learn from each other's experiences.

This year's theme "Water Districts: Rising Above Natural, Environmental, and Financial Challenges" comes at a most significant time. It is interesting to note that these challenges were hurled upon us the past years against a backdrop of economic instability, peace and order concerns, and political unrest. It is with pride, therefore, that I celebrate with all water districts for keeping ourselves afloat amid the turbulence of the times.

Let us keep the ideals which we have nurtured through the years: a water district free from political influence and in control of itself. May this Convention serve to keep our unity, dedication and dynamism alive as we go forward together, working hand in hand to bring quality water supply service to our concessionaires.

Mabuhay!

LORETO G. LIMCOLIOC
National President, PAWD

23rd PAWD National Convention

Waterfront Cebu City Hotel, Lahug, Cebu City
January 22-26, 2002
Theme: Water Districts: Rising Above Natural, Environmental and Financial Challenges

Water Districts Meet Today in Annual Confab

More than 1000 delegates composed of general managers and directors, representing 565 water districts throughout the country will troop today to Cebu City to attend the 23rd annual convention of the Philippine Association of Water Districts, Inc. (PAWD). This year's theme is "Water Districts: Rising Above Natural, Environmental and Financial Challenges", reflecting the positive attitude of the local water utilities in the face of environmental destruction, natural calamities, and financial difficulties that they face.

The Convention brings together not only the top brass in water districts but also national policy and decision-makers, and the water district's financial and institutional partners in the sector.

This annual event provides the different water districts in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao with a venue to exchange ideas, learn from each other's experiences, and discuss solutions and alternatives to pressing problems and concerns confronting the water sector, particularly the local water districts.

"The theme reflects the positive attitude of the water districts in the face of environmental destruction, natural calamities, and financial difficulties that we face," says Engr. Loreto G. Limcolioc, PAWD President and General Manager of San Jose Del Monte City Water District.

"The Convention is expected not only to strengthen the ties that bind the water districts but also to inspire the Water Districts to deliver efficient water supply service in spite of the challenges," added Atty. Daniel P. Fandiño, PAWD Chairman of the Board of Governors and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Calamba Water District.

Aside from the technical session where topics on social, environmental, political, economic and technological climate in the water sector will be presented, the convention will also feature exhibits of the latest trends, products and advancements in water supply.

Noted local and foreign manufacturers, consultants and traders of water supply requirements will participate in the said exhibition.

Among the highlights of the convention will be the election of the new set of officers who will serve for the next two years.

PAWD 2002 IN
CEBU

A significant role in the development process

As in primitive times where economy thrived where water is available, so has water availability in the present times dictated the economic growth of communities.

More than just providing water to over 25 million Filipinos in the countryside, the creation of Water Districts brings with it, among others, increase in land values, increased investments which brings increased employment opportunities, improved health and sanitary conditions, and reduction of fire damages. The Water Districts themselves provide opportunities for stable employment. Today, they have a total workforce of over 25,000 personnel.

Likewise, Water Districts serve as keepers of water resources as they combat pollution, excessive water extraction and massive denudation to assure their concessionaires with sufficient and reliable water supply, come rain or shine, today and in the future.

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIE

22 January 2002, TUESDAY

7:00 AM	**GOLF TOURNAMENT** *Cebu Country Club*
8:00 AM	**TENNIS TOURNAMENT** *Suncase Tennis Court*
1:00-5:00 PM	**REGISTRATION OF CONVENTION PARTICIPANTS**
1:00 PM	**BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT (ELIMS)** *Capitol Parish Gymnatium*
2:00 PM	**COURTESY CALL ON CEBU CITY MAYOR** *Cebu City Hall*
3:00 PM	**BRIEFING OF CONTESTANTS** *NOPMC*, Function Room 1, WCCH* *Plumbing Olympics**, Function Room 2, WCCH*
	INGRESS OF EXHIBITORS *Ballroom Lobby, WCCH*
3:30 PM	**COURTESY CALL ON CEBU GOVERNOR** *Cebu Provincial Capitol*
7:00 PM	**BRIEFING OF JUDGES (NOPMC)*** Function Room 2, WCCH

* 7th PAWD National Oratorical and Poster Making Contests
** 1st PAWD National Plumbing Olympics

CONVENTION PROPER

23 January 2002, WEDNESDAY

8:00 - 12:00 NN	**CONTINUATION OF REGISTRATION** *Mezzanie Foyer, WCCH*
8:30 - 11:30 AM	**7th PAWD NATIONAL POSTER-MAKING CONTEST** *Gazebo Poolside, WCCH*
9:30 AM	**OPENING OF EXHIBITS** *Ballroom Lobby, WCCH*
10:00 AM	**OPENING CEREMONIES** *Ballroom, WCCH*
1:00 PM-5:00 PM	**1st PAWD PLUMBING OLYMPICS** *TESDA Region VII Compound*
	7th PAWD NATIONAL ORATORICAL CONTEST *Ballroom, WCCH*
6:30 PM	**FELLOWSHIP NIGHT** *D'Family Park, Talamban, Cebu City*

24 January 2002, THURSDAY

8:30 AM - 5:00 PM	**TECHNICAL SESSION** *Ballroom, WCCH*
5:30 PM	**BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT (FINALS)** *Capitol Parish Gymansium*

25 January 2002, FRIDAY

8:30 AM-10:00 AM	**LWUA HOUR** *Ballroom, WCCH*
10:00 AM - 12:00 NN	**GENERAL ASSEMBLY** *Ballroom, WCCH*
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM	**ELECTION OF OFFICERS** *Ballroom, WCCH*
6:30 PM	**AWARDING, INDUCTION AND TURN-OVER CEREMONIES** *Ballroom, WCCH*

26 January 2002, SATURDAY

8:00 AM	**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING (NEW SET OF OFFICERS)** *Function Room 1, WCCH*
	DEPARTURE *Various Hotels, Airports and Seaports*

Security amidst the challenges

By GM Loreto G. Limcolioc, President, Phil. Association of Water Districts, Inc. and Atty. Daniel P. Fandiño, Jr., Chairman, PAWD Board of Governors

The efficient delivery of water supply service lies upon several factors: the quality of the water resources, the quantity of water supply, a workforce equipped with the technical know-how, a management that shares the national vision for water supply development, a community that understands and appreciates the nature and operation of the water districts, a government cognizant of the water district's need for financial support.

The concerns that the water districts face today are anchored on these factors but the most difficult challenge we have to face is the challenge of sustainability as we confront the national, and even global, economic crunch.

The Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) from which we source most of our funds is itself facing financial problems. Just as our amendatory bills in Congress have not taken off beyond the third reading due to time constraints and legislative priorities among other reasons, LWUA's bill seeking an increase of their capitalization stock from P2B to P10B has not prospered.

> *"...the most difficult challenge we have to face is the challenge of sustainability..."*

Internal cash generation is not a very reliable source of funds to expand the system since in most water districts collections are not even enough to cover the cost of operations. One of the ways by which the Water Districts may raise funds to sustain its operation is to increase the water tariff. However, lest it be forgotten, water has become a political issue and the lowering of water tariff, or even just maintaining it at its current level, is a promise that most politicians make during election period.

Aside from this, the Water Districts have to contend with the ceiling on water rate increase which is currently pegged at 60% of the existing water rate. This ceiling hinders cost recovery since many water districts started with a low water rate base.

Water Districts are also confronted with the rapid depletion and degradation of our water resources, both of which are rising proportionately to the increase of population and industrialization. While developments in water supply technology unfold before us by the day for us to address these problems, the lack of financial resources to formulate and implement programs using the latest technologies sets back all efforts to improve and expand the service.

FACTS AT A GLANCE

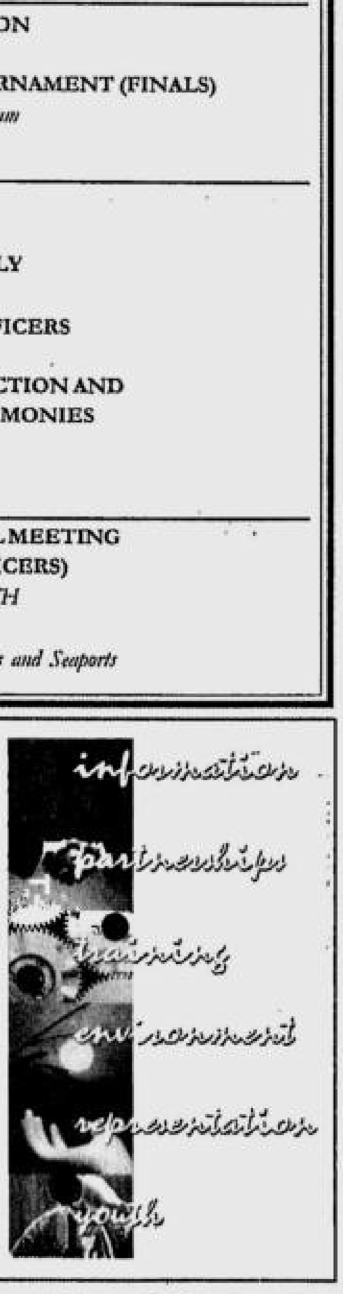
- As of December 2001, there are **565 Water Districts** formed throughout the country.
- Water Districts employ more than **25,000 people** to provide safe and potable water to over **25 million Filipinos** in the countryside
- Water Districts are **NOT** LWUA, MWSS or NAWASA. Water Districts have their own characteristics, functions and objectives as mandated by PD 198, as amended or the Provincial Water Utilities Act of 1973. They are charged with providing safe drinking water to the Filipinos outside the Metro Manila area.

PAWD has, for the last 27 years, assisted the water districts in their quest to become self-reliant and efficient water providers in the Philippine countryside. By giving them avenues for the discussion of industry issues and concerns and by providing them with crucial and up-to-date information, PAWD has become instrumental in the water districts' continuing growth and progress.

In the new millenium, PAWD is determined to lend its hands to the water districts in areas of representation, environmental protection, youth awareness, training, information and partnerships beneficial to the drinking public.

Let us serve.

PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF
WATER DISTRICTS, INC.
2/F LWUA Bldg., Katipunan Ave.,
Balara, Quezon City 1105
Telephone 920-5453; Telefax 927-5092
E-mail: pawd@impactnet.com



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President

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Furious vendors threw Munti grenade, say cops

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICE believe that angry vendors were behind the grenade explosion that killed a 4-year-old girl and her 8-month-old sister and injured at least 28 other people, including two policemen, in Muntinlupa City Monday night.

Alabang precinct commander Senior Insp. Rene Lasola said the vendors threw the grenade after local authorities expelled them from areas near the Alabang viaduct which they had been occupying illegally.

The vendors, some of whom came from Mindanao, had sent bomb threats to the Traffic Enforcement and Discipline (TED) team of Mayor Jaime Fresnedi after they were expelled from their spots, Lasola told the Inquirer yesterday.

Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez, Southern Police District director, said police also suspected operators of illegal terminals and small-time crime syndicates as the ones responsible for the grenade attack.

Gutierrez yesterday deployed 30 additional policemen to secure the area just below the busy Alabang viaduct.

On Monday, an unidentified man hurled a fragmentation grenade at a congested area in front of Garmas Store on Montillano Extension in Alabang about 8:30 p.m., according to Lasola.

The grenade hit a steel railing and bounced onto a TED patrol vehicle, killing Dianne Beronia, 4, and her 8-month-old sister Michaela, Gutierrez said.

The children's mother was also injured and was taken to a hospital outside Muntinlupa, Lasola said.

At least 28 other people, including PO3 Ronnie Celiz and PO1 Rodelio Pulhin of the Muntinlupa police, were wounded in the blast.

Celiz and Pulhin, along with TED members Conrado Navarro and Rogelio Navarro, were conducting an anti-vendor operation when the grenade exploded near their Anfra patrol van (SFG-420).

Lasola said he and his men have already determined the whereabouts of the man who hurled the grenade and are ready to arrest him.

Police were preparing a sketch of the man based on the descriptions provided by a witness.

Lasola said the local government drew the ire of the vendors when the TED action team drove them away from their spots in the Alabang viaduct area.

"The vendors lost a lot of money because of the operation, that's why they're mad," Lasola said.

Operators of illegal terminals, including local thugs, might also have a hand in the attack, according to Gutierrez.

The SPD has begun an intensive campaign to rid Alabang of illegal vendors and terminals as well as snatchers preying on commuters.

Dusit Hotel skinheads locked out

By Alcuin Papa

SOME 300 employees of the Dusit Hotel Nikko protested management's unfair treatment of some of their colleagues who were not allowed to work for shaving their heads.

The workers shaved their heads to protest the collapse of the collective bargaining agreement with hotel management last week.

Assistant supervisor Rey Rasing said management unjustly fired or suspended the employees, including supervisors and rank-and-file workers, who shaved their heads in protest last Thursday.

Malou Rosal, the hotel's public relations manager, told the INQUIRER that the workers who shaved their heads were ordered not to go on duty because the bald look was "in violation of the hotel's grooming standards."

"We are a conservative hotel," Rosal said. "Like all other five-star hotels, Dusit Hotel Nikko has strict grooming standards that require all the staff to sport conservative hairstyles. With this mass action, management was constrained not to allow those who have (shaved their heads) to go on duty."

Rasing said nothing has been happening in the year-old CBA negotiations.

Union officials said hotel general manager Chiyuki Fujimoto reportedly told the employees that the company could not give in to their demands, including salary increases, allowances and other benefits.

But the employees later discovered that the 114 hotel managers were given bonuses of P30,000 each last Christmas, the union said.

"How could they say the hotel was not making any money and that they could not give any benefits to rank-and-file employees when the managers were given bonuses," Rasing asked.

Man kills own son while they grapple for gun

By Philip C. Tubeza

ZALDY R. Yu demanded money from his parents for the last time.

Yu, 34, who was said to have been drunk at the time, was killed when he grappled with his own father for a handgun in their Manila home before dawn yesterday.

The younger Yu got angry when his mother did not give him the P4,000 he was asking to pay for the bills he and his friends incurred at an unidentified bar, said SPO1 David Tuazon of the Western Police District homicide section.

Yu, of Gonzalo Puyat Street, Quiapo, Manila, went home drunk about 2:30 a.m. and asked his mother, Erlinda Rubio, for money, Tuazon said.

He told his mother he and his friends could not pay their bills at a nightclub, Tuazon said.

Rubio gave Zaldy P2,000, but he asked for P2,000 more, Tuazon said. When Rubio could not give him the amount, the son got angry and started banging on the walls of their house, Tuazon said.

The policeman said Zaldy's father, businessman Antonio T. Yu, 58, was awakened by the noise and tried to calm him down, Tuazon said.

"But the son reached for his father's gun, which was on top of a drawer," Tuazon said. Antonio tried to grab the super .38-caliber pistol from his son and a scuffle ensued.

During the tussle, Antonio's gun suddenly went off and the son was hit in the right armpit.

The parents immediately took their son to the UST Hospital but they were too late, Tuazon said.

Antonio surrendered himself and his licensed gun and its loaded magazine to the police. Tuazon said investigators were still trying to determine whether he should be charged for the death of his son.

Basketball pointers from Acapulco

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

IT came all the way from Acapulco in Mexico. The letter, dated Dec. 11, 2001, was mailed when coach Ron Jacobs was in the first phase of tryouts for the RP national basketball team to the Asian Games. The letter predictably got stalled with the great bulk of holiday mail. Honorio E. Ybera Jr. wrote something for Mr. Jacobs, who unfortunately is still in the hospital after suffering a stroke on Dec. 23. Late as it is, the message has not gone stale. Please share Mr. Ybera's tiny thesis:

"I am not saying that the People's Republic of China (PROC) cannot be beaten. But as sure as the sun sets in the west, the PROC of Mao Zedong could not have beaten the team of Loyzaga during his heyday.

"Firstly, PROC under Mao Zedong was still in the stage of rehabilitation. And, lastly, Loyzaga stood alone in Asia's cagedom. I likened him to Michael Jordan in his youthful prowess. Press people even called him Yco's powerhouse. He could do things that no Asians could.

"He was dexterous. He dribbled, hooked, jumped-shot with either hand. He rebounded well and ran fast. The University of San Francisco Dons wanted him to play for them. I saw him dunk one of his warm-ups in Zamboanga. PAL's import Leo Swhaiger did the same but was not impressive. I remember that JRC's Ilano got better rating from the *provincianos* because he was only five-nine. Dunking was not a fad then and even Minneapolis Lakers' tall man George Mikan or US seven-foot Olympian Bob Kurland did not dunk.

* * *

"The height factor worked against the RP national team in the Olympiad in Mexico. Perhaps, the traumatic experience of the late Ed Ocampo (he was the only one who successfully silenced Shin Dong Pa) against the Greeks and the Belgians was a bitter pill to swallow. Non-Zone qualifiers beating Asia's fabled crew black and blue?

"As I have been saying before, I deny that a six-five at the pivot cannot do it. Coach Rupp of Kentucky did it in the US NCAA. And so did coach John Wooden at the UCLA with shorter guards like Gail Goodrich and Walt Hazzard. It can be done but in an atmosphere free of overexposure and where money is not the only thing that counts.

"Ron Jacobs should reckon with the existing fat contracts of the star players in his lineup. He must also know of the year-long basketball season that is purely entertainment and money-making. The Filipino hoopsters no longer can distinguish between love of country and the paychecks they can get.

"I know that Mr. Jacobs has scouts to study playing schemes and styles of the opposition. But to think merely of PROC, South Korea and Lebanon as dark horses is taking off on the wrong foot. He has North Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Kazakhstan, Jordan, Saudi Arabia (Israel if the ABC admits it to its fold) and Turkey, if it participates. Turkey to the uninitiated is half-Asian and half-European. Israel, as it had done to South Korea in 1970, can beat PROC.

"Through the years, the Filipinos' value and appreciation of basketball have deteriorated. Where in the world can one find a professional selection finishing second to an amateur team and being honored in the presidential palace? This sad scenario could be likened to the USA Dream Team finishing behind the Canadians or the Puerto Ricans.

"Add all these to other humps laid out for Jacobs, and one knows that he faces a steep challenge to bring home the proverbial bacon. Personally, I hate to be in his shoes. It is damned if you do and damned if you don't.

"Anyway, we still look forward to seeing Jacobs in one piece after his bout with the lions in their den."

Cop guns down jueteng collector

By Agnes E. Donato

A ROOKIE policeman is now being hunted down by his colleagues for killing an alleged jueteng bet collector during a birthday party in a squatters area in Quezon City early yesterday morning.

Charges of homicide are now being prepared against PO1 Alex Aliwalas, of the Central Police District Station 1 in La Loma, Quezon City.

The victim was identified as Joel Altea, 39, of Dagat Street, Barangay Manresa, Quezon City. He died of a gunshot wound in the head.

Investigation showed the shooting took place at about 1:45 a.m. yesterday in front of the victim's house.

Aliwalas and Altea were reportedly having a drink with other guests when an argument broke out between them.

Police said the misunderstanding deteriorated into a shouting match which upset the policeman, prompting him to pull out his handgun and shoot the victim.

Aliwalas immediately fled.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, January 23, 2002
2nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **1 S 17:32-33, 37, 40-51**
Gospel: **Mk 3:1-6**

Again Jesus entered the synagogue. A man who had a paralyzed hand was there and some people watched Jesus: Would he heal the man on the sabbath? If he did they could accuse him.

Jesus said to the man with the paralyzed hand, "Stand here in the center." Then he asked them, "What does the Law allow us to do on the sabbath? To do good or to do harm? To save life or to kill?" But they were silent.

Then Jesus looked around at them with anger and deep sadness because they had closed their minds. And he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out and his hand was healed. But as soon as the Pharisees left, they met with Herod's supporters, looking for a way to destroy Jesus.

Commentary

Jesus was condemned to death while bringing life to others. Jesus was "too much" for the religious authorities of his time; for them the Temple, the synagogue, the Sabbath and even the literal observance of so many commands were more important that justice, human solidarity and compassion for the people. For Jesus, however, any law that was not in favor of human life could not be considered divine law. Jesus, knowing that there was capital punishment for those who transgress the Sabbath, risked his life while helping the man with the withered hand. We, as followers of Jesus, are to place the well being of each human person as a top priority, even if we risk criticism or persecution from those who believe that principles, national security, dogmas and market laws are first.

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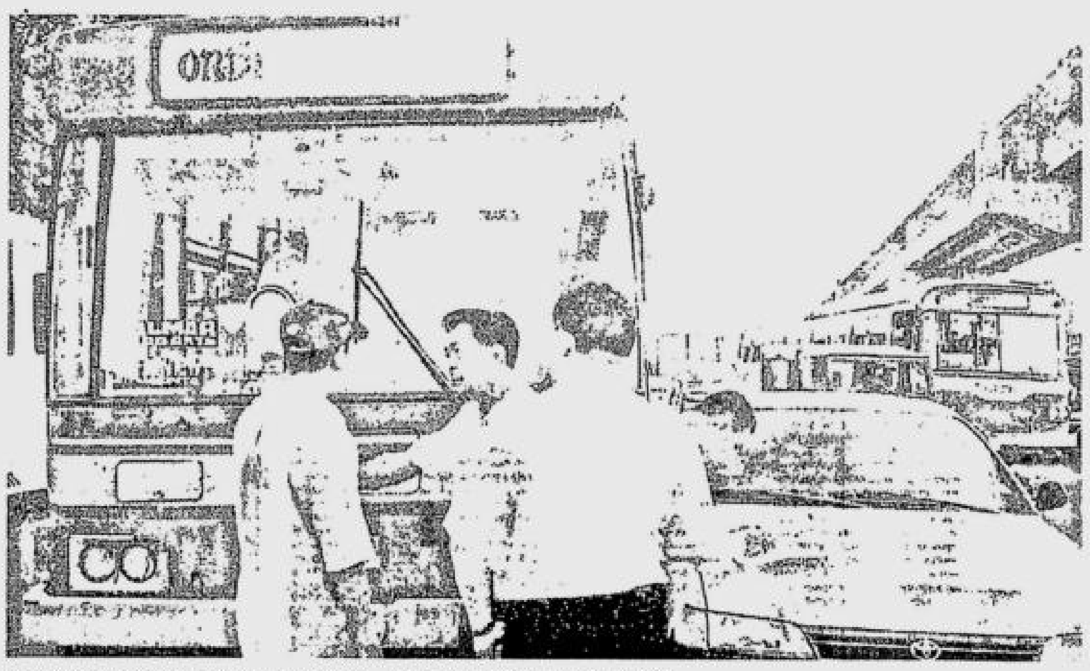
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Abuse of superior strength—Abuse of superior strength requires, at base, a deliberate intent on the part of the malefactor to take advantage thereof. Besides the inequality of comparative force between the victim and the aggressor, there must be a situation of strength notoriously selected and made use of by the offender in the commission of the crime. In this case, there were 4 malefactors including accused-appellant who was armed when they attacked and ganged up on the unarmed victim. It need not be overemphasized that there was a blatant inequality of strength between the victim and his assailants. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, People v. Ortiz, G.R. No. 133814, July 17, 2001]

Digest by R.B. Vera



TAXPAYERS GET THEIR MONEY'S WORTH

Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin S. Abalos seems to be trying to give taxpayers their money's worth as he makes an on-the-spot investigation of a collision between a public vehicle driver and a private car owner on Edsa.

Manila City Hall extends tax deadline

THE MANILA City Hall yesterday extended to Feb. 8 the deadline for the payment of business permits and other regulatory fees.

The deadline was originally on Monday. But in a special session last Friday, the city council passed a resolution moving the deadline to Feb. 8.

Mayor Lito Atienza, who approved the resolution, noted there were still many business owners who were paying their taxes and renewing their permits and licenses as of late last Friday.

The INQUIRER also observed more taxpayers going to City Hall yesterday and on Monday.

The mayor said to further facilitate the payment of taxes and other fees, the city government "stretched" the working hours of the employees at the Manila Taxpayers' Lounge from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

The city government has also announced it would be giving discounts ranging from 15 to 20 percent to those who pay in advance their quarterly real property tax dues.

Jerome Aning

Bomb scare, thieves hit senators

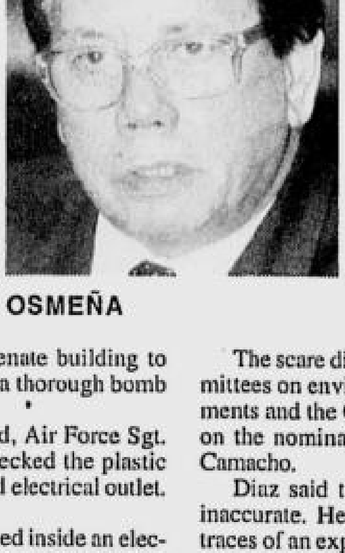
(From page A23)

about 11 p.m. Monday to go the comfort room. But when Badian returned, the car was gone.

Osmeña said he was so upset he immediately fired the driver.

Osmeña said he was in the hotel with some government officials deliberating on the implementing rules and regulations on the privatization of the National Power Corp. (Napocor).

Two years ago, the Mitsubishi Pajero of then-senator Juan Ponce Enrile was also stolen. The vehicle was later found in the compound of the National Bureau of Investigation on Taft Avenue in Manila.



OSMEÑA

Yesterday morning's bomb scare prompted occupants of the Senate building to leave their offices while waiting for a thorough bomb check.

But before a SWAT team arrived, Air Force Sgt. Marlon Diaz, the K-9's handler, checked the plastic bag which the dog found in an unused electrical outlet.

The bag yielded nothing.

The plastic bag was found crammed inside an electrical outlet on the wall right beside the parking slot for opposition Sen. Blas Ople, according to Lt. Marlou Diaz, Air Force explosive ordinance specialist.

The parking area is exclusively used by senators and their chiefs of staff, according to Rodolfo Cristobal of the Senate's general services division.

Cristobal said he noticed the plastic bag in the electrical outlet when he left the parking area around 5:45 p.m. on Monday.

The bag was brought to the Villamor Airbase for tests, he said.

Among the senators who were seen rushing out of the building around 9 a.m. were Senate President Franklin Drilon, Senators Ralph Recto, Juan Flavier and Robert Jaworski. Sen. Robert Barbers refused to leave the building, thinking the bomb scare was a hoax.

The scare disrupted the hearings of the Senate committees on environment and on constitutional amendments and the Commission on Appointments hearing on the nomination of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

Diaz said the K-9 dogs had no history of being inaccurate. He said it was possible the plastic bag had traces of an explosive material.

Sen. Vicente Sotto III said he was surprised that the plastic bag found its way into the electrical outlet when there were several Marines in the area.

METROBRIEFS

Samaritan's reward

DRIVER Jaime de Padua, 55, took pity on a young couple with a baby that rode in his cab and offered to help them out. In return, the couple robbed him at knifepoint and tried to strangle him. De Padua, of Padilla Street, Navotas, said he picked up Danilo Carpio, 27, his wife Lani, 21, and their baby on A. Mabini Street, Caloocan City about 1:30 a.m. Saturday. "They appeared to be confused," he told PO2 Alberto Eustaquio. "I took pity on the baby who was crying." On Torres Bugallon Street near the Caloocan City Hall, Danilo pulled out a knife, tied De Padua's hand to the steering wheel with a plastic straw and took his money. His wife, who was sitting behind the driver with the baby, also tried to strangle De Padua with her bare hands. De Padua managed to pull free from the steering wheel, jumped out of the taxi and shouted for help. Bystanders caught Lani with the baby. Her husband escaped. Lani and her baby are in the custody of the Caloocan police.

Andrea Trinidad-Echavez, Contributor

Scent of a woman

QATARAN engineer Mahamad Saeed Baghazal, 54, said he passed out and lost more than P80,000 in cash and valuables after he "smelled something" from the body of a "fat" woman he invited to his hotel room in Ermita, Manila. Baghazal, 54, a tourist who was staying at the City State Hotel on A. Mabini Street, Ermita, claimed he only invited the woman to talk in the hotel room about 9:30 p.m. Friday. He ended up losing a camera, an Alcatel cellular phone, blood testing machines, three wristwatches, traveler's checks, gold jewelry, two plane tickets, and cash in Qataran and Philippine denominations totaling P82,850, said SPO3 Cecilio Sacorum of the Western Police District. Baghazal said the woman approached him at Robinson's Place that night. In his room, he was struck down by the scent coming from the woman's body, he said. He described the woman, who identified herself as "Lily," as about 45, fair complexioned, a bit on the heavy side, and with a mole on her upper lip.

Philip Tubeza

All pumped up

CARMELITO Abella pumped up the volume of his radio Sunday during the Feast of the Sto. Niño in Pandacan, Manila, but he was not able to enjoy the loud music for long because angry barangay chair Efren Zaide shot him. Cristina Abella, 31, of Beata, Pandacan, accused Zaide, of Barangay 839, Zone 91, Pandacan, of shooting her husband Carmelito, 41, with a .45-caliber pistol about 7 a.m. Sunday, said SPO2 Mario Salonga of the Western Police District. Zaide got irritated when Carmelito turned up the volume of his radio so early in the morning, police said. Zaide asked Carmelito to lower the volume but the latter allegedly insulted him. Zaide shot Carmelito. Carmelito is now confined at the Philippine General Hospital.

Philip Tubeza

Gonzales, 76

LAWYER Ramon A. Gonzales of Lumbao, Iloilo, a constitutionalist, 1989 Philippine Bar Association awardee and 1971 Constitutional Convention delegate, succumbed to lung disease on Jan. 17.

He was 76.

He is survived by his wife Lylia and their children Dulce, Punay, Ligaya, Ramona, Lilita, Maya, Ramon Jr., Liwanag and Portia.

His remains will lie in state at the St. Joseph's Hall of Mt. Carmel Church up to Jan. 23. Then they will be transferred to Pototan, Iloilo. Burial is on Jan. 30 at Forest Lake in Mandurriao, Iloilo.

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

PRINCIPAL sponsor President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo joins the newlyweds and their parents.

PHOTOS BY EDWIN BACASMAS

'Princess' Ana weds Mikey's future brod-in-law

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

"Butterfly kisses after bedtime prayer/ Stickin' little white flowers all up in her hair/ Walk beside the pony daddy, it's my first ride/ I know the cake looks funny, daddy, but I sure tried/ Oh, with all that I've done wrong, I must have done something right/ To deserve a hug every morning/ And butterfly kisses at night."

TO THE TUNE of **Bob Carlisle**'s "Butterfly Kisses," sung by **Janno Gibbs**, actress **Ana Roces** on Sunday night marched down the aisle and exchanged "I dos" with **Greg Montenegro.**

Ana (**Marinella Adad** in real life), 26, looked like a princess in an **Inno Sotto** gown when her dad **Rene Adad** gave her away in the evening wedding at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati.

Ana wore a spaghetti-strapped gown with a low back and a flowing train, complemented by a tulle veil.

"She's like a walking doll," remarked a female guest.

It has been more than a year since Ana and Greg met at a party hosted by Cinderella's **Richie Santos**. They were introduced by Greg's younger sister, **Angela Montenegro**, who is also the first cousin and reported bride-to-be of presidential son **Mikey Macapagal-Arroyo.**

Greg was at home and about to sleep that night when he received an "urgent" phone call from his sister. Angela had apparently asked Ana if she had a boyfriend. When Ana said no, Angela called her brother and urged him to come to the party.

Greg was instantly smitten when he met Ana, said a source close to the couple. As early as last June, Ana and Greg had laid out plans for their January wedding.

The principal sponsors were led by President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.** Also a sponsor was Bacolod Rep. **Monico Puentevella,** a close family friend of the Adads who are from the same province.

Even if Ana is from show biz, her guest list had very few show biz names. Candle sponsor **Almira Muhlach** was the only show biz figure in the entourage.

In the reception, Ana's close friend, **Vina Morales**, regaled the couple and their guests with the bride's favorite song, "I Won't Last a Day Without You." Greg, 34, got a "treat" when Vina asked Ana to sing the refrain for him.

Janno, who sang in the church, shared a table with "Beh Bote Nga" co-star **Anjo Yllana**. Ana is a mainstay of the weekly GMA sitcom.

The ever-ebullient **Edu Manzano** hosted the reception held at the Mandarin Oriental Manila.

Other show biz stars in the grand ballroom were violinist **John Lesaca** whose wife **Marilou Arroyo** is the sister of First Gentleman **Mike Arroyo,** and actor **Luis Gonzales** who came with his wife **Vina Mercado.**

At another table with Edu were **June Rufino,** who is also the talent manager of Ana, and designer **Frederick Peralta.**

Ana is the only girl among the three children of Rene and **Carmiña Adad.** She left show biz for a while to study hotel and restaurant management at the Isle of Man International School in London.

After working briefly as sales account manager at the Mandarin, Ana was convinced to return to show biz, but only on TV on "Beh Bote Nga."

She also put up her own Italian restaurant, La Tavola, on Remedios Street in Malate, Manila.

Greg, the eldest of the four children of **German Montenegro** and **Charito Arroyo-Montenegro,** is a business management graduate of Wharton University.

Ana did not say whether she would give up show biz after getting married. But Ana says Greg doesn't hinder her from doing what she likes to do.

Greg and Ana left yesterday for the first leg of their honeymoon in Bangkok and Phuket in Thailand.

In March, they are set to go on a month-long vacation in the United States.

SEALED with a kiss. Mr. and Mrs. Greg Montenegro.

MIKEY Arroyo and fiancée Angela Montenegro, the groom's sister

'The Exchange' takes first step toward healing

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

AFTER a season of showing how Filipino and Eastern European youths can learn a lot by living in each other's country, ABC 5's "The Exchange" (9:30 p.m., Thursdays) now shifts its focus to an all-local version of that instructive exchange.

This time, **Sari Simon**, a Christian student from the Ateneo de Manila University, will trade places for 13 episodes with **Tajmahal Sulaiman**, a Muslim student from the Mindanao State University in Tawi-tawi.

Lesson learned: For Sari, who's an only child, the experience of finding herself with 10 brothers and sisters was remarkable—to say the least! She also learned to do without many of the conveniences she had gotten used to in Manila (like a flush toilet, for one).

But there were many compensating experiences for the heretofore landlocked college co-ed, like rappelling Bongao peak and fishing in the sea.

For her part, Tajmahal suddenly had to live the life of an only child in the big city, which was often fun, but it took time for her to adjust to Manila food and its hectic lifestyle.

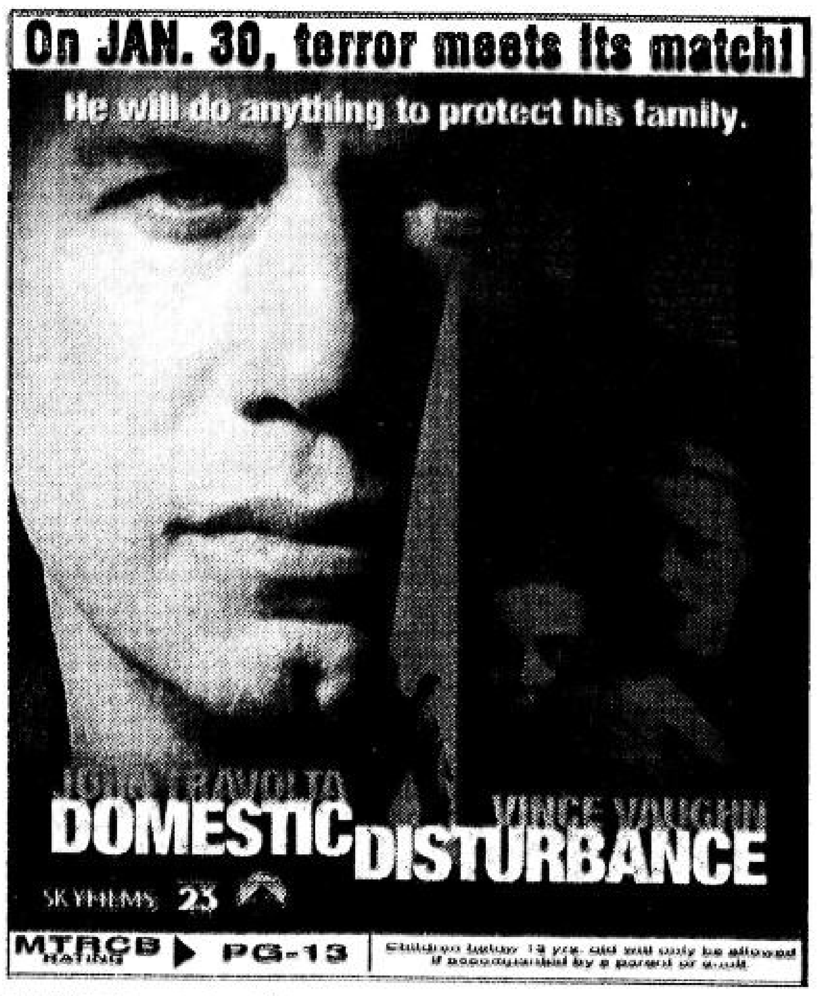
Beyond lifestyles, of course, the episodes will have a lot to say about different and even conflicting cultures, mind-sets, grievances and expectations.

Indeed, if handled right, the Sari-Taj exchange can help humanize and particularize at least some of the Christian-Muslim and Manila-Mindanao conflicts that have been tearing us apart for centuries.

Like "Bagong Buwan," we can't expect this new season of "The Exchange" to heal all wounds. But the fact that the first steps in that direction are being taken in film and on television is a heartening development, indeed.

Winning big

LAST Jan. 13, **Josie Ramos** won a brand-new Kia Pregio LS-Special Edition on ABC 5's "The Price Is Right," hosted by **Dawn Zulueta**. Also included in her P805,000 showcase was a Kenwood DVD component, a Panasonic 21" TV set, a GE aircon, TV cabinet, portable CD player, Eiffel Tower lamp, and magazine rack.



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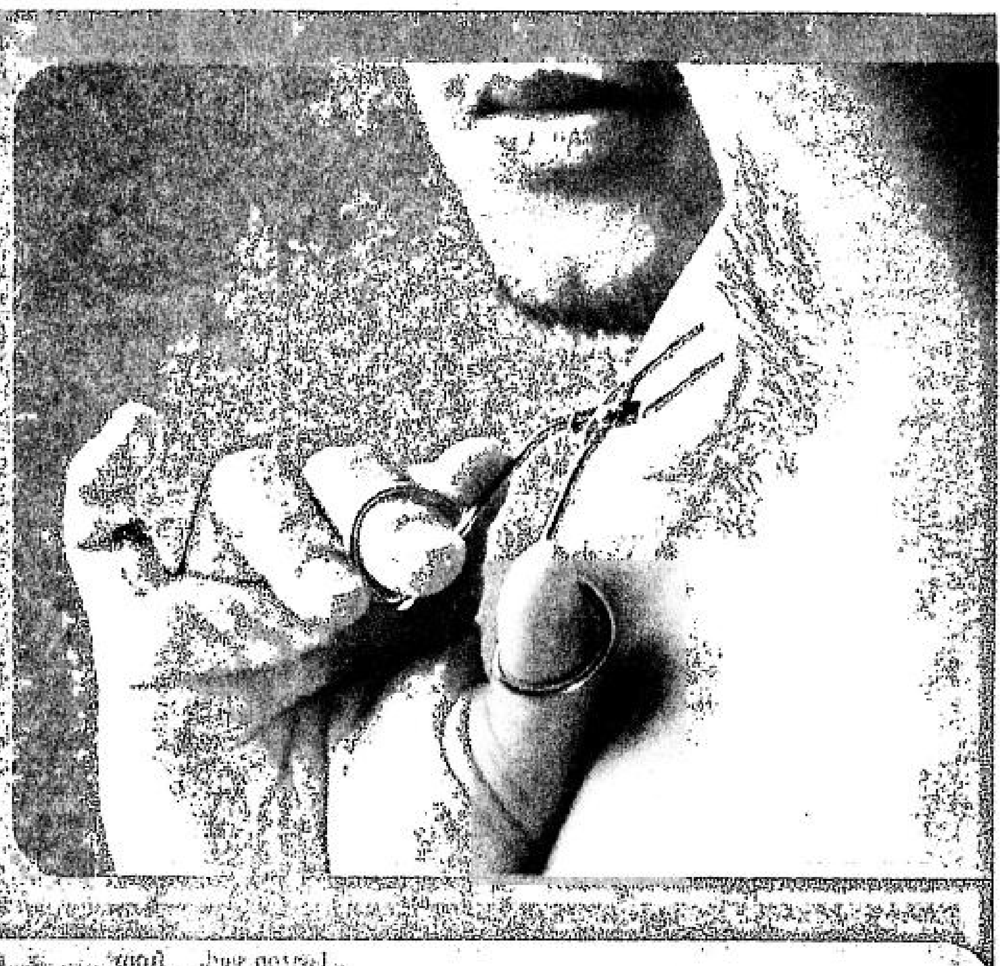

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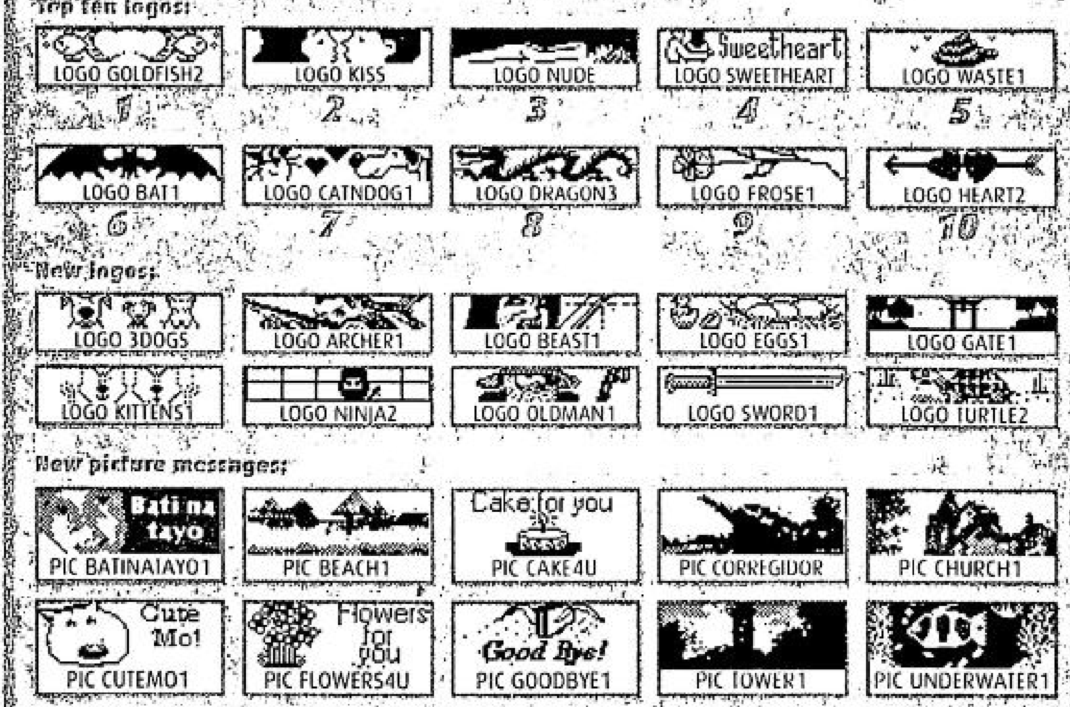

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Cookie's Disco	CTW Sesame Street	TONE COOKYDISCO
High	Lighthouse Family	TONE HIGH
Lost In Space	Lighthouse Family	TONE LOSTINSPACE
Ocean Drive	Lighthouse Family	TONE OCEANDRIVE
Free	Lighthouse Family	TONE FREEZ
Run	Lighthouse Family	TONE RUN

Top ten ring tones:

1	Superman Theme		TONE SUPERMAN
2	Smooth Criminal	Michael Jackson	TONE SMOOTHCRI
3	Angel	Sarah Maclachlan	TONE ANGEL
4	Lady Marmalade	Christina Aguilera	TONE MARMALADE
5	Butterfly	Crazy Town	TONE BUTTERFLY
6	Smooth	Santana	TONE SMOOTHSAN
7	Clint Eastwood	Gorrilaz	TONE CLINTEAST
8	Lambada	Reginaldo Francisco	TONE LAMBADA
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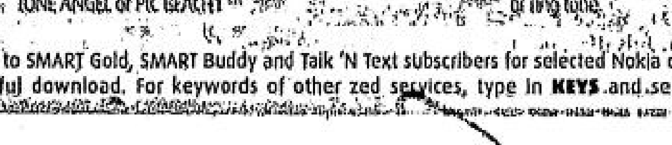

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GLORIETTA 4

1	THE OTHERS In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2	BEHIND ENEMY LINES In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
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4	CORKY ROMANO In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
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4 GOLD (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	CORKY ROMANO
6 GOLD (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
8	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
9	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
10	AMERICAN ADOBO

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4	
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4	

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7 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
8 (SDDS)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
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6 (DOLBY)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
7 (DTS)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
8	BURLESK KING
9	

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2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3	AMERICAN ADOBO
4	CORKY ROMANO
5 (SDDS)	THE OTHERS
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7 (DOLBY)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
8	BURLESK KING

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5	THE OTHERS

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3	BURLESK KING
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	BUKO PANDAN

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LRT CINEMA
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1 (DOLBY)	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	

Berma
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2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

CitiMall
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1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
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2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

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4	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

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2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3	LORD OF THE RINGS

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2 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

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2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3	

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3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

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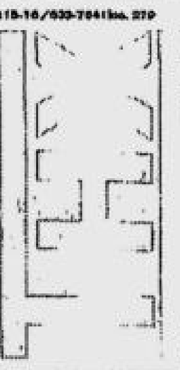

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6	CORKY ROMANO
7	BEHIND ENEMY LINES

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8	ZOOLANDER

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8	AMERICAN ADOBO

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	THE OTHERS
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ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
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QUEZON-1	BUKO PANDAN
REMAR	BUKO PANDAN
REMAR-2	BEHIND ENEMY LINES

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A	MAHAL KITA FINAL ANSWER
B	
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

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CINEMA-2	BUKO PANDAN
CINEMA-3	AMERICAN ADOBO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BURLESK KING
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CINEMA-15	AMERICAN ADOBO

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CINEMA-6	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

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1	MAHAL KITA . . .
2	CORKY ROMANO
3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	THE OTHERS
5	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
6	ZOOLANDER
7	LORD OF THE RINGS
8	SPY GAME
9	AMERICAN ADOBO
10	BURLESK KING

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	BURLESK KING
2	LORD OF THE RINGS
3	ZOOLANDER
4	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
5	THE OTHERS
6	MAHAL KITA . . .
7	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
8	MAHAL KITA . . .
9	AMERICAN ADOBO
10	CORKY ROMANO
11	SPY GAME
12	BUKO PANDAN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	THE OTHERS
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	CORKY ROMANO
4	LORD OF THE RINGS
5	GLASS HOUSE
6	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
7	ON THE LINE
8	BURLESK KING
9	MAHAL KITA . . .
10	ZOOLANDER
11	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
12	AMERICAN ADOBO

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	THE OTHERS
3	LORD OF THE RINGS
4	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5	CORKY ROMANO
6	SPY GAME
7	BURLESK KING
8	ZOOLANDER
9	MAHAL KITA . . .
10	AMERICAN ADOBO
11	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
12	BUKO PANDAN

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	CORKY ROMANO
2	MAHAL KITA . . .
3	BUKO PANDAN
4	BURLESK KING
5	AMERICAN ADOBO
6	ZOOLANDER
7	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
8	LORD OF THE RINGS
9	HUBOG
10	ON THE LINE
11	BAGONG BUWAN
12	SPY GAME

SM SOUTHMALL
8060088 • 8063782

1	BURLESK KING
2	THE OTHERS
3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	MAHAL KITA . . .
5	BUKO PANDAN
6	ZOOLANDER
7	AMERICAN ADOBO
8	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
9	CORKY ROMANO
10	LORD OF THE RINGS

SM CITY CEBU
2313676

1	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
2	LORD OF THE RINGS
3	LORD OF THE RINGS
4	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5	BURLESK KING
6	BATANG LANSANGAN
7	BUKO PANDAN
8	AMERICAN ADOBO

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	CLOSED
3	SPY GAME
4	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
5	GLASS HOUSE
6	BATANG LANSANGAN
7	CLOSED
8	AMERICAN ADOBO

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
3	LORD OF THE RINGS
4	AMERICAN ADOBO
5	ZOOLANDER
6	MAHAL KITA . . .

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	AMERICAN ADOBO
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	ZOOLANDER
4	MAHAL KITA . . .

SM GUADALUPE COMM'L
8820905

1	AMERICAN ADOBO
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	MAHAL KITA . . .

SM CITY TUTUBAN
2514302

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	BURLESK KING
4	MAHAL KITA . . .

SM CITY DAVAO
2974004

1	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4	WALANG IWANAN
5	BURLESK KING
6	GLASS HOUSE

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

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SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

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1
2

SOON TO OPEN!
2 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

6389781-85

Hard Rock presents initial 2002 offering

"LITEROCK at Hard Rock" will feature Ogie Alcasid in a show aptly titled "A Better Man," 9 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 24.

The concert is Hard Rock Cafe's initial offering for the year and is in line with its monthly concert series with 96.3 Wrock.

Noted for his hit songs not only for himself but also for other artists, Ogie Alcasid once more rides on the wave of success. Proving again that he is one distinguished master of his craft, he is now in the thick of promotion for his latest album, "A Better Man."

Other events to look forward to at Hard Rock this month are South Border on Jan. 25, Franco Laurel's album launch on Jan. 26, Cynthia Alexander on Jan. 30 and Chad Borja on Jan. 31.

For inquiries, call Hard Rock Café at 893-4661 to 64.

UP Film Center screens latest Lav Diaz opus

FERNANDEZ

THE UP Film Center and the Directors' Guild of the Philippines will sponsor a symposium on militarization and the Filipino psyche, tomorrow, Jan. 24, at the UP Film Center in Diliman, Quezon City.

Highlight of the event is a special screening of the latest masterpiece of Lav Diaz for Regal Entertainment, "Hesus Rebolusyonaryo," at 3 p.m.

Panelists for the symposium are opinion columnist Rina Jimenez David of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, poet-novelist and MTRCB member Alfred Yuson, Prof. Miriam Coronel-Ferrer (director of the UP Third World Studies Center), film directors Joel Lamangan and Lav Diaz.

Moderator is Wendell Capili, UP College of Arts and Letters associate dean.

Expected to attend the symposium are representatives of student governments and councils from various colleges and universities, as well as sociology and political science students from schools all over the country.

"Hesus Rebolusyonaryo" is set nine years into the future as it takes a peek into an apocalyptic era in the year 2011.

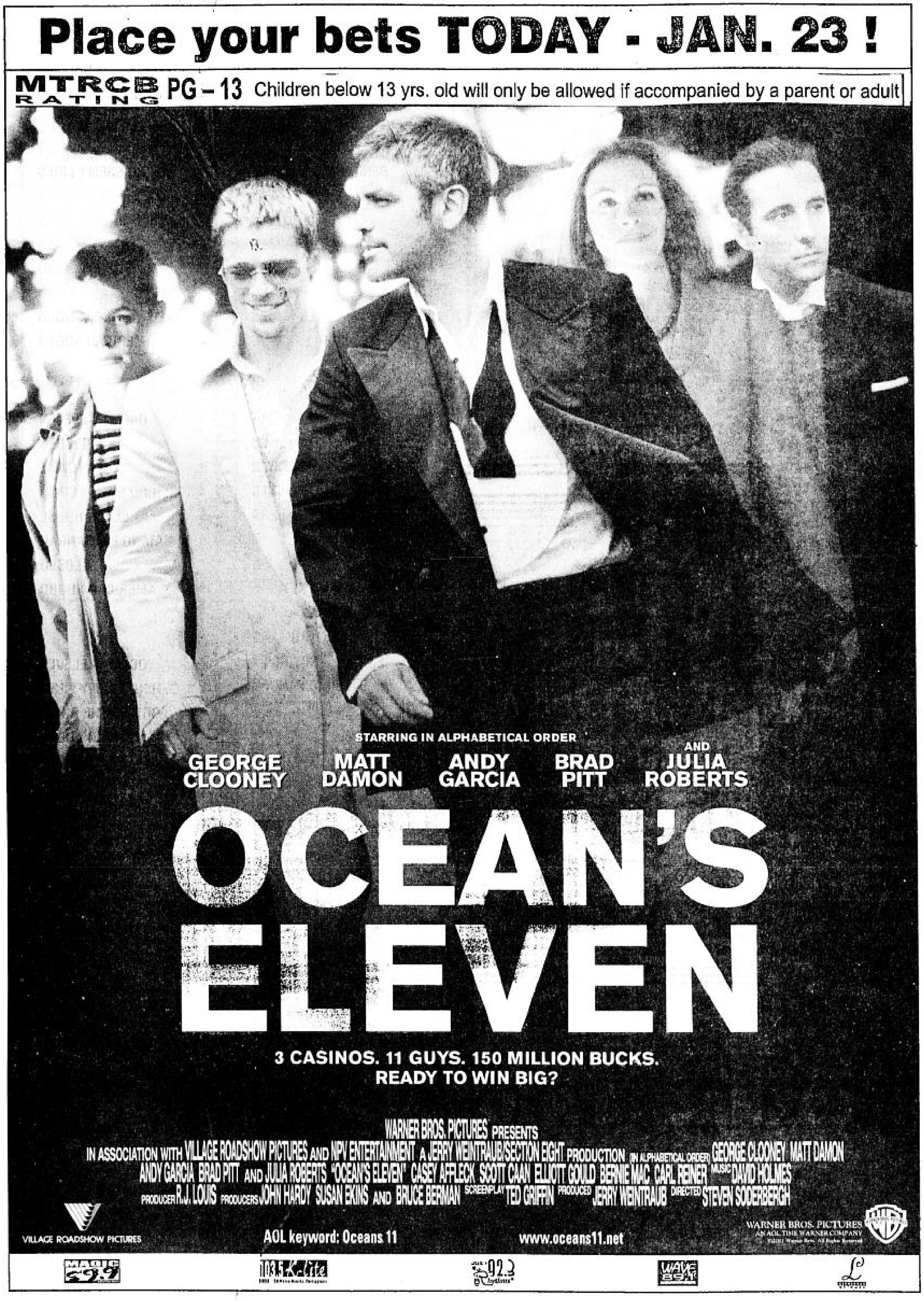
A military junta led by General Racellos has overturned the Philippine Republic and established a dictatorship. Martial Law is in place. Rebels are hunted down and killed. Hapless civilians fall victim to massacres.

Against the nightmare scenario stands one man, Hesus Mariano, played in the movie by Mark Anthony Fernandez.

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

ZOOLANDER - P13 11:45, 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45, 9:45	CORKY ROMANO - P13 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30	AMERICAN ADOBO - R18 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:45, 10:10
BEHIND ENEMY LINES - P13 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	OCEAN'S ELEVEN - P13 12:30, 2:55, 5:20, 7:45, 10:10	OCEAN'S ELEVEN - P13 11:30, 1:55, 4:20, 6:45, 9:10

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri., 11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.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OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3 CASINOS. 11 GUYS. 150 MILLION BUCKS.
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AOL keyword: Oceans 11
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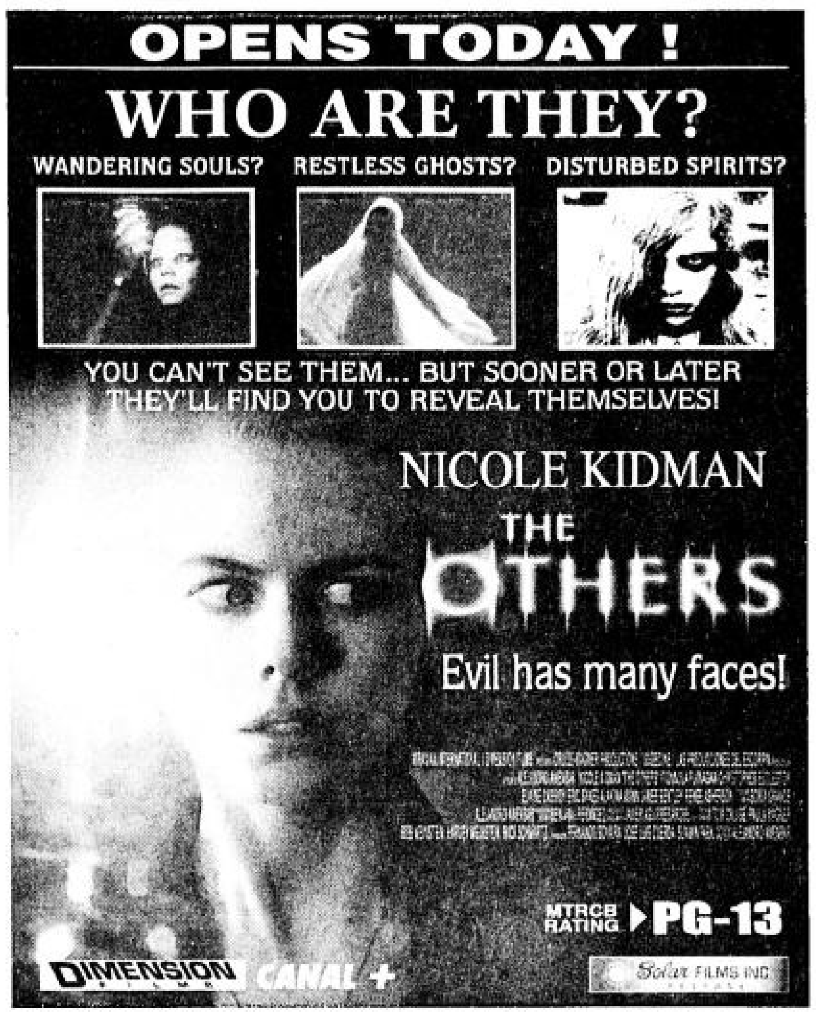
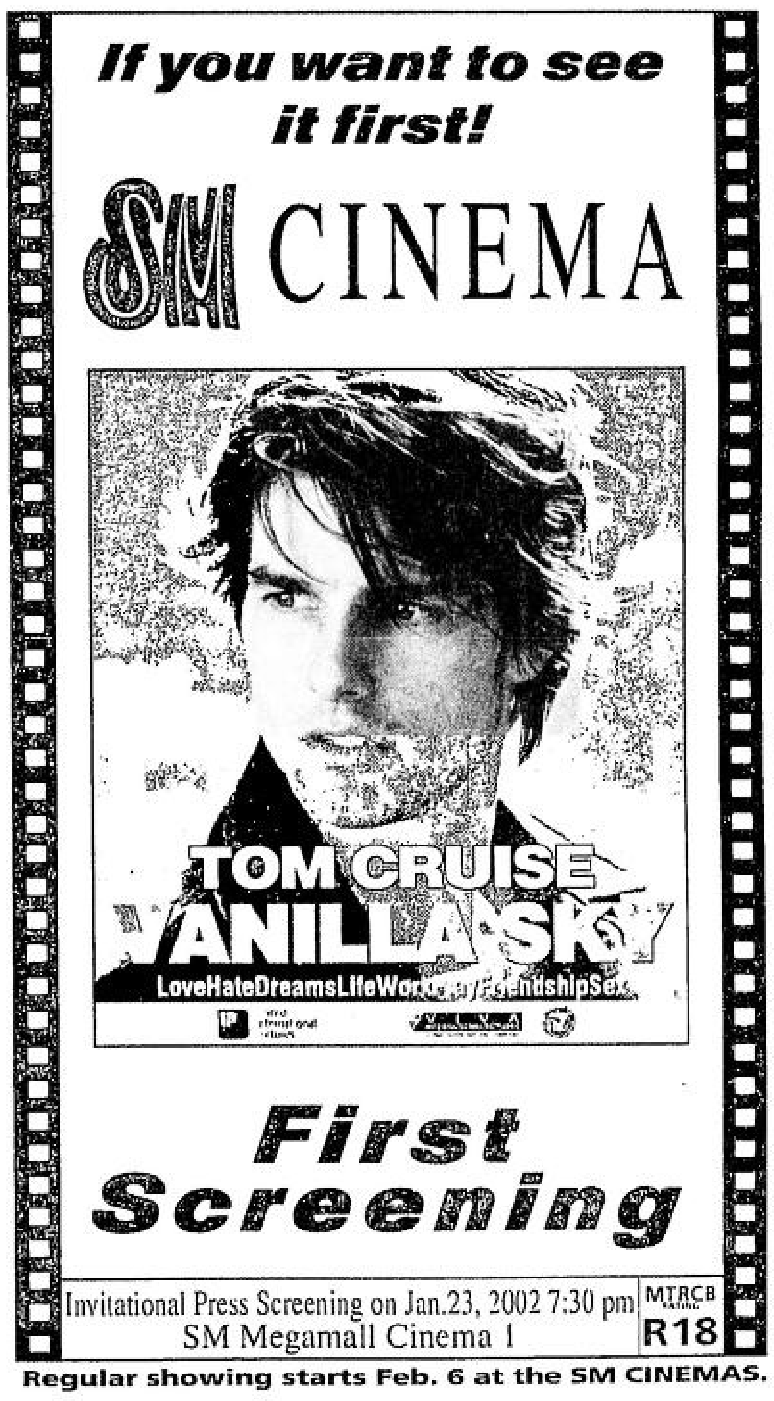
WARNER BROS. PICTURES AN AOL TIME WARNER COMPANY
MAGIC 89.9 103.5 K-Lite 92.3 WAVE 89.1


OPENS TODAY !
WHO ARE THEY?
WANDERING SOULS? RESTLESS GHOSTS? DISTURBED SPIRITS?
YOU CAN'T SEE THEM... BUT SOONER OR LATER THEY'LL FIND YOU TO REVEAL THEMSELVES!
NICOLE KIDMAN
THE OTHERS
Evil has many faces!
MTRCB RATING PG-13
DIMENSION FILMS CANAL+ Solar FILMS INC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VANILLA SKY
LoveHateDreamsLifeWorkPlayFriendshipSex
First Screening
Invitational Press Screening on Jan.23, 2002 7:30 pm
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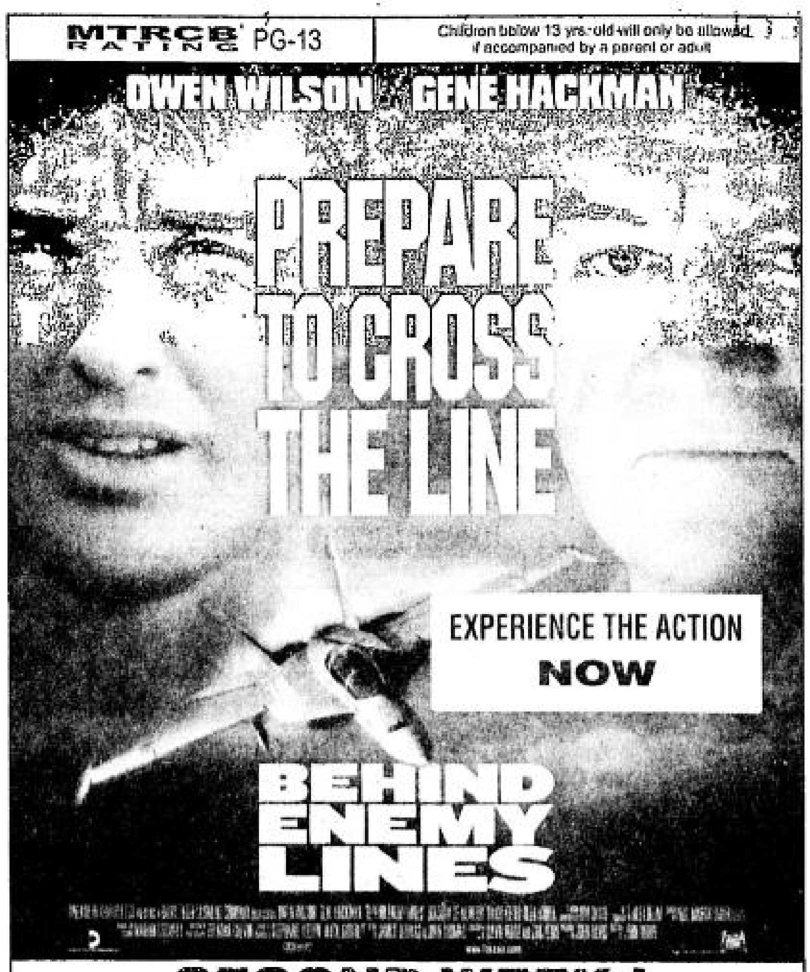
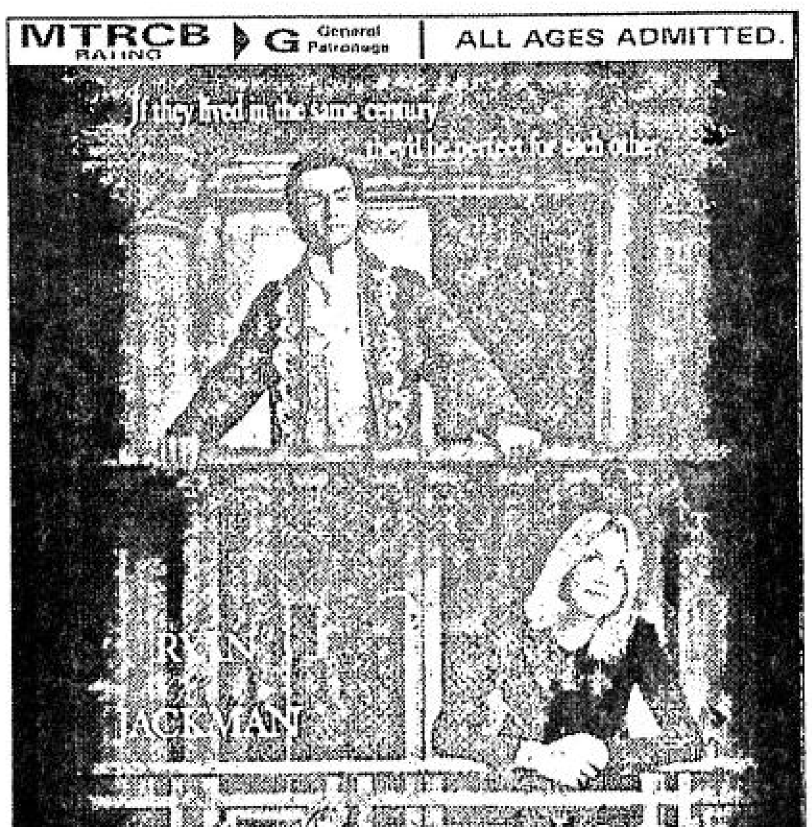
TOUCHSTONE PICTURES PRESENTS A ROBERT SIMONDS PRODUCTION CHRIS KATTAN "CORKY ROMANO" PETER BERG CHRIS PENN RICHARD ROUNDTREE VINESSA SHAW WITH FRED WARD AND PETER FALK MUSIC RANDY EDELMAN LISA BROWN TOM BRONSON EDITOR ALAN CODY PETER POLITANOFF STEVEN BERNSTEIN, A.S.C. TRACEY TRENCH ROBERT SIMONDS IRA SHUMAN DAVID GARRETT & JASON WARD DIRECTED BY ROB PRITTS
Touchstone Pictures
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures


MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
OWEN WILSON GENE HACKMAN
PREPARE TO CROSS THE LINE
EXPERIENCE THE ACTION NOW
BEHIND ENEMY LINES
SECOND WEEK !


MTRCB RATING G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED.
If they lived in the same century they'd be perfect for each other
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KATE & LEOPOLD
OPENS FEB. 6

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NE Pacific Cabanatuan	Jan. 25 - Feb. 17	SM City Cebu	Jan. 22 - Feb. 5	Limketkai CDO	Jan. 25 - Feb. 17
Pacific Mall Legaspi	Jan. 25 - Feb. 24				
Center Mall Baguio	Jan. 25 - Feb. 25				

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Goodwill Subd., Parañaque City ***LUZON:*** **Laoag** G/F Jonsons Place Rizal cor. Guerrero Sts., Laoag City **Vigan** 2/F Landmark Bldg., Jose Singson St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur **Baguio** Banco de Oro Bldg., Upper Session Rd. cor., Gov. Pack Road, Baguio City **San Fernando, La Union** CKC Arcade, Quezon Avenue, San Fernando, La Union **Dagupan** G/F Insular Bldg., Arellano St., Dagupan City **Urdaneta** G/F Francis Bldg., San Vicente Vill., North National Highway, Urdaneta, Pangasinan **Tarlac** G/F Lolita Bldg., McArthur Highway, Sto. Cristo, Tarlac, Tarlac **Angeles** G/F Sonny Lao Bldg. 888 Jake Gonzales Blvd.,Angeles City **SM Pampanga** G/F SM City Pampanga **Bataan** Rural Bank of Pilar Bldg., J.P. Rizal St., Balanga, Bataan **Olongapo** G/F Ocampo Bldg., 960 Rizal Ave., East Tadinac, Olongapo City **Malolos** G/F Bonifacio Bldg., Paseo de Congreso, Barasoain, Malolos **Baliuag** 602 G/F De Leon Bldg. Cagayan Valley Road Poblacion, Baliuag, Bulacan **Cabanatuan** Door 2, Sta. Rina Bldg., Maharlika Highway, Cabanatuan City **Bayombong** G/F Garingan Bldg., National Hi-way, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya **Santiago** Almazan Bldg., National Highway cor. Luna St., Santiago, Isabela **Ilagan** 129 Rizal St., G/F Zara Bldg., Centro Ilagan, Isabela **Tuguegarao** 2/F Twinluck Bldg., Luna St., Tuguegarao, Cagayan **Aparri** 2nd Floor Antionio Lim Bldg., Rizal cor. Alvarado Maura Aparri, Cagayan **Calamba** G/F Anderson Bldg. II, National Highway, Parian Calamba, Laguna **San Pablo** G/F Colago Bldg., Colago Ave., San Pablo City **Palawan** G/F Balsa Bldg., National Highway, San Pedro, Puerto Princesa **Naga** 46 Rosales Bldg., Peñafrancia Ave., Naga City **Legaspi** 2/F Dy-Yanzon Bldg., Lapu-Lapu St., Legaspi City **Batangas** G/F Insular Life, Hilltop, Batangas City **Lucena** G/F Ma. Cristina Bldg., Granja cor. 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Senate eyes cap on gov't borrowings

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE SENATE is set to push for a law that will put a cap on government borrowings and reduce the huge debt that the future administration will inherit.

Senators Joker Arroyo and Ralph Recto yesterday brought up the issue on excessive government borrowings during the Commission on Appointments' hearing on the confirmation of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

"We want to put a cap on the gross borrowings of the government because the country's total debt is already at an alarming rate of 70 percent of the gross domestic product," Recto pointed out.

Arroyo said a cap on foreign borrowings was provided by the General Banking Act of 2000. The senator said he had already filed a bill that would limit the government's borrowings.

Recto said he was looking at a formula wherein the government's borrowings each year would be limited to its budget deficit plus the debts it had to pay and a certain percentage to give the administration the flexibility in its borrowing stance.

But Camacho was not supportive of the idea, saying that a cap might affect the government's ability to tap the market for funds when rates could be at their cheapest as they had done recently.

"A cap may hamper our strategy in dealing with market conditions and could make the job of funding the country's requirements more difficult," said the finance secretary, whose appointment has yet to be confirmed by the CA.

The government borrows from the local and foreign markets yearly to refinance its existing debts and to fund its budget deficit.

This year, the government had to borrow P267.4 billion. Of the total, it would use P155.6 billion to service its debts while P111.8 billion would be used to finance a P130-billion budget deficit.

Recto pointed out that the government had been exceeding its borrowing targets by 300 to 500 percent yearly. Arroyo complained that excessive foreign borrowings gave legislators very little room to maneuver when tackling the budget bill since a big portion of the proposal was already devoted to debt repayment.

Of the total annual budget, Recto said the government allots nearly 40 percent to service its debts.

He said he was concerned that the aggressive borrowing stance of the Macapagal administration would be a burden to be inherited by the next regime and would make fiscal discipline harder to implement.

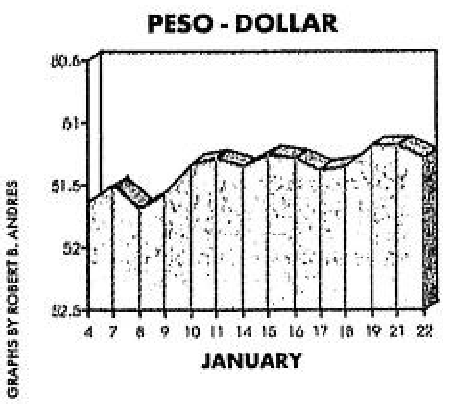
Camacho explained that the government had to be "opportunistic" in its borrowing stance and tap the market for funds when it least needs them so the rates would be cheaper.

He pointed out that of the $1.4

SENATE/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



Peso-Dollar Rate

P 51.28 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Jan. 22, 2002

¥ 133.62 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Jan. 22, 2002

GOLD:$283.20/283.70
per ounce Hong Kong,
Jan. 22, 2002

STOCK MARKET

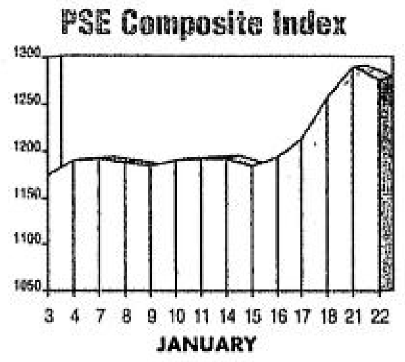
Shares down 1%

SHARE finished lower yesterday as the market underwent a technical correction following ample gains in past sessions, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 12.72 points, or one percent, at 1277.91, following Monday's 2.6-percent rise. The main index has gained 8.9 percent in the past four sessions.

Turnover was higher at 967.27 million shares but volume was down at P792.08 million from Monday's 793 million shares worth P806 million.

SHARES/ B2



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Independent power supply for MRT, LRT eyed

BY ABIGAIL L. HO

IN light of Monday's Luzon-wide blackout, Metro Manila railway systems Light Rail Transit and the Edsa Metro Rail Transit are exploring the possibility of having their own power supply.

Edsa MRT-3 general manager Mario Miranda said in a telephone interview Monday that he would propose to the Department of Transportation and Communications a separate power generator that would serve the Edsa MRT-3's everyday power requirement.

"We're looking at the possibility of asking for private sector participation through a BOT (build-operate-transfer) scheme for the MRT's power requirements. We're always at the mercy of Meralco (Manila Electric Co.) and Napocor (National Power Corp.). I'll propose this to Undersecretary (Wilfredo) Trinidad and Secretary (Pantaleon) Alvarez as soon as possible," he said.

LRT Authority chief Teodoro Cruz Jr., on the other hand, disclosed in an interview Tuesday that it was possible to put up a separate "power plant," although this needed to undergo thorough study.

"For the BOT scheme for the power supply, we would have to do a cost-benefit analysis. If we push through with this, fares would definitely go up. That's an obvious result. I'm very cautious about it," he said.

He added that the LRT currently had no plans to install a power source separate from Meralco's, but it was open to sharing one with the Edsa MRT-3.

"We have no plans right now on a BOT for the power supply. We're going to study if it's possible for the MRT and the LRT to have a single power supply," he said.

Because of Monday's blackout, Cruz said the LRT posted foregone revenues of close to P1.5 million.

"On the average, we earn P4.2 million every Monday. Yesterday, we just earned P2.9 million. Our estimated losses amounted to almost P1.5 million," he said.

The LRT was paralyzed for over four hours yesterday.

Despite the losses, Cruz said blackouts that last for several hours, like Monday's, occurred only around four to five times a year so using power supplied by Meralco was still feasible.

He added that some of these power outages happened during nighttime when both the LRT and the Edsa MRT-3 had no operations.

"Besides, if someone would sabotage our power plant, both the MRT and the LRT would be paralyzed. This (a separate power supply) can be done, but at what expense? We'll eventually have to use taxpayers' money anyway," he said.

Cruz added that, as far as the LRT was concerned, any additional funding could be better spent for expansion and facilities upgrade as "this would help the public more."

Both the LRT and the Edsa MRT-3 are connected to Meralco's main grid. Every time a Luzon-wide blackout occurs, the operations of both railways are paralyzed.

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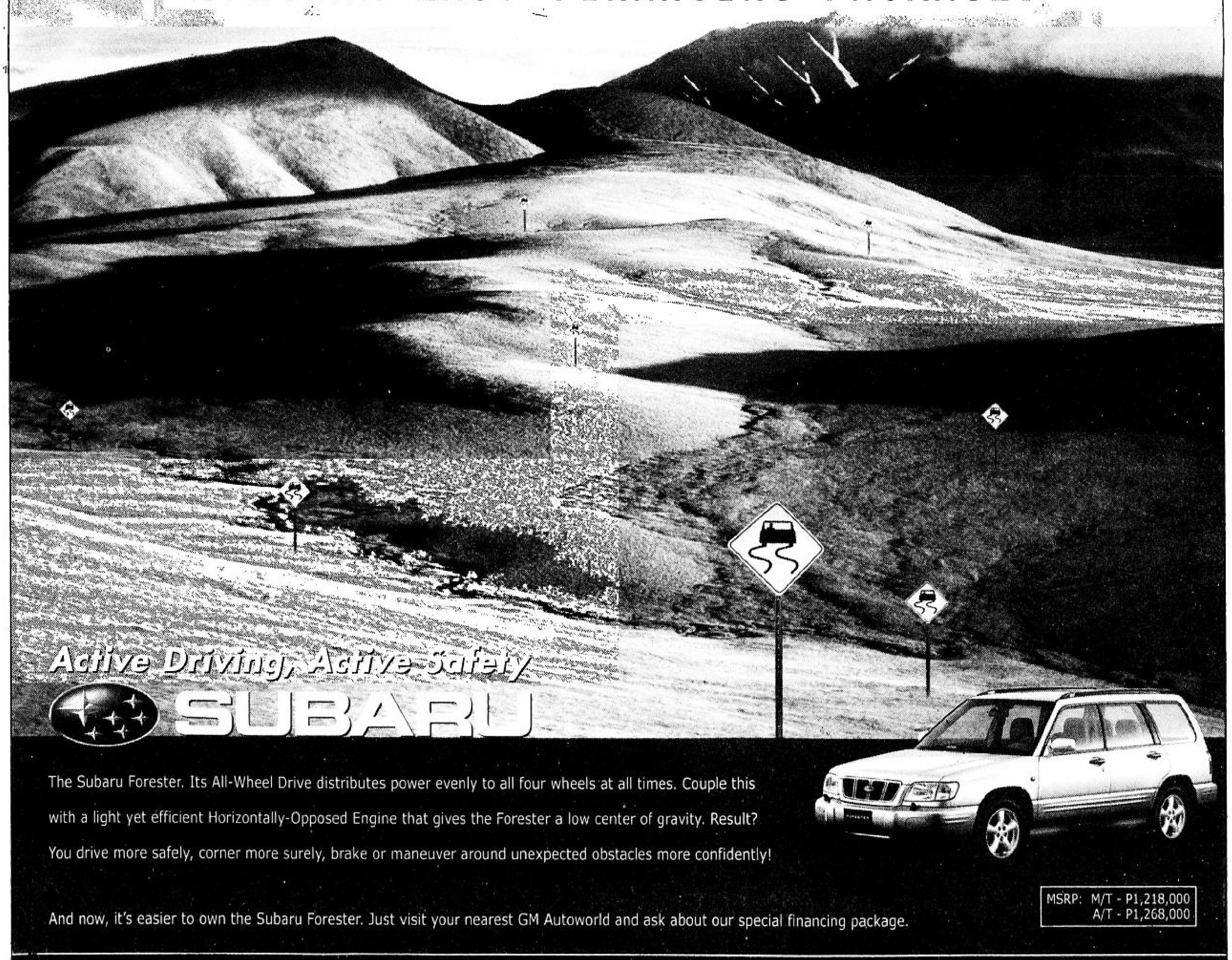

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Cuisia urges Congress to investigate PNB deal

By Elena R. Torrijos

FORMER central bank governor Jose Cuisia is seeking a congressional investigation into the deal between the government and tobacco magnate Lucio Tan to rehabilitate Philippine National Bank.

Cuisia said the government should take control of PNB rather than agreeing to a power sharing of the distressed financial institution.

He pointed out that the government extended P25 billion to help PNB and if this were treated as a potential investor coming in to save a bank, naturally the investor would take control. Also, against the government's P25 billion, Tan had infused only a little more than P20 billion.

"Why did the government have to bail out PNB? Was there really a run? Who was responsible for bringing in Mr. Tan? The P25 billion are valuable resources . . . there has to be an investigation," Cuisia asserted.

He also criticized the planned power-sharing agreement on PNB.

"(Finance) Secretary Camacho is just trying to salvage the situation but you have to get control (of PNB)," Cuisia stressed, adding that the BSP has been given vast powers to effect the government's takeover of the bank despite BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura's statements to the contrary.

Under the term sheet inked last month, the memorandum of agreement to be signed this week will allow the government and Tan to have "equal" control of PNB, which has the biggest amount of soured loans in the entire banking industry.

The government would nominate the chair of the board, the chair of the executive committee, the chief financial officer, corporate secretary and the deputy general counsel. At the same time, Tan shall have the right to appoint four members to the PNB board and one independent director as well as the general counsel, assistant corporate secretary and deputy chief finance officer.

The taipan would also wield the ultimate decision on the choice of bank president based on a roster of names to be submitted by the government.

The government-Tan joint venture would be based on the conversion into equity of a portion of the combined P25 billion in emergency loans extended by the Bangko Sentral (P15 billion) and the state-owned Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (P10 billion) to PNB in 2000. Specifically, P7.8 billion of the original P25 billion would be converted into equity in PNB at P40 per share in order to give both Tan and the government equal stakes in the bank at 44.98 percent each.

PNOC to invest ₱2B this year

By Ronnel W. Domingo

STATE firm Philippine National Oil Co. has earmarked P2 billion for its investments this year, including those of its subsidiaries.

PNOC chief operating officer Alfredo Parungao said in an interview that the amount would cover various projects such as the $1.2-billion naphtha cracker plant, an integrated coal minemouth power project and a planned drilling for gas in Cotabato.

PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corp. (PPDC) is wrapping up preparations to start next year the construction of the $600-million first phase of the naphtha project, for which PPDC would shell out $100 million in equity.

The state firm's single biggest project this year is scheduled for commissioning in late 2005.

Also, PNOC Exploration Corp. is in the middle of preparations for a coal-fired plant project with a dedicated open pit coal mine.

The firm also plans to drill exploration wells for natural gas in Cotabato.

Last year, PNOC posted net earnings of at least P500 million apart from the earnings of its subsidiaries.

Parungao said their earnings came from money market placements and rental fees of locators in their petrochemical complex in Bataan.

Parungao said the firm had invested about P3 billion in government securities.

"Our earnings in 2001 is roughly the same as that of the previous year, but another P600 million might come in if Petron Corp. would remit to us," he said.

PNOC has a 40-percent stake in Petron Corp., which had been the firm's subsidiary before the downstream oil industry was deregulated in 1998.

NEW TOYOTA PRESIDENT ROGER CARPIO

Nobuharu Tabata (left), incoming president of Toyota Motors Philippines Inc., is greeted by Harold Koh, president of GM Automobiles Philippines Inc. (right), during a reception to honor outgoing TMPI president Takeshi Fukuda (second from right). Also in photo is Mrs. Fukuda.

INTERNET-RELATED VENTURES

Philweb signs partnership with Philpost

By Doris C. Dumlao

INTERNET upstart Philweb.com has entered into a strategic partnership with state-controlled Philippine Postal Corp. to venture into Internet-related businesses while tapping the latter's nationwide network of postal offices and branches.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Philweb spokesperson Roberto Valdes said the company has signed a memorandum of agreement that would allow Philpost to sell, market and distribute its prepaid Internet cards.

"The parties further agreed to consider the establishment of virtual post offices and the introduction of hybrid mail services," Valdes said.

Analysts said such services might include e-cards, business-to-consumer delivery of goods through Internet orders and other services.

This developed as postal services across the globe are facing stiff competition from real-time communication tools made available by the Internet. As such, postal companies are starting to integrate Internet and information technology into their traditional businesses.

As part of the new tie-up, Philweb has also agreed to issue Philpost-Philweb co-branded prepaid Internet cards.

In 2000, Philweb also tied up with the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines for the establishment of 1,255 cyber-world Internet cafes in selected areas across the country and to provide high-speed broadband Internet access, particularly to students. Under the agreement, Philweb was tasked to provide satellite connectivity, personal computers and satellite dishes.

To date, Philweb, which is owned by former Trade Minister Roberto Ongpin, is also bidding to acquire a 40-percent stake in and take over management control of dormant mining firm Itogon Suyoc Mines Inc. (ISMI), which is, in turn, controlled by the Ortigas family.

Under Philweb's management, ISMI plans to change its business thrust to IT, media, telecommunications or similar industry and negotiate with investors who would infuse the necessary capital or assets for the project.

Philweb itself used to be a mining company named South Seas and Natural Resources Inc. before Ongpin's group took over in early 2000.

To date, however, the PSE has yet to clear the listing of additional ISMI shares that is needed to consummate the Philweb-ISMI deal.

Nestlé optimistic about 2002

THE RESULTS of the recent survey conducted by the Makati Business Club are not surprising and support Nestlé's continuing optimism about the resiliency of the economy, specially in the near term, according to Nestlé Philippines Inc. chair and CEO Juan R. Santos.

"There is a lot that needs to be done and can be accomplished only if everyone does his share."

Nestlé Philippines is the biggest food and beverage company with revenues last year reaching P48 billion. "Nestlé did reasonably well despite unfavorable circumstances here and around the world," Santos said. "We experienced a volume growth of 5 percent from a higher rate in turnover due to price changes and also due to improved receipts from exports," he added.

For this year, Nestlé said it was determined to face the challenges with much optimism as there were many positive signs, such as improved foreign exchange rate, lower interest, lower inflation, improved agricultural productivity and strong consumer-led demand. This optimism is reflected in Nestlé's sales target for 2002, which is an improvement from its performance in the previous year.

Commenting on the ongoing labor strike in its Cabuyao factory, Santos said: "We have a temporary setback due to an illegal strike in our Cabuyao factory but here again, we are hopeful that this can be resolved soon. The DOLE secretary has issued a return-to-work order, most of our employees would like to do that but the strikers have barricaded the gates. We hope that the PNP can soon implement Secretary Sto. Tomas' order to open the factory gates."

Santos said that in order to effectively address the issues on the economy and the four-point program of the government, the solution must involve both government and the private sector, working hand-in-hand toward a common goal of nation building.

"We need to act, not only with a sense of urgency but with a lot of motivation toward doing what is good for the country in general. We cannot complain all the time and yet, not be prepared to do our own part," Santos said.

He added that there was far greater transparency in the present administration which makes the conduct of business more conducive for private sector innovation.

Santos explained that Nestlé would continue to push for its expansion program, specially its thrust in exports. "Once we get our expansion program going, it will benefit downstream industries, improve our competitive advantage and ability to compete for more export business."

Shares down 1%

(From page B1)

"This is just a slight correction. Some people are taking profits but there are other people buying," said Jacob Nocom of Asiasec Equities.

"Given the sharp gains in the last four days we expected this profit-taking, which is really healthy for the market," added a local brokerage dealer.

Yesterday's market decline didn't come as a surprise given its rapid advance in recent trading days, traders said.

"The technical correction was expected since it already started yesterday on some issues," said BPI Securities assistant vice president Spencer Yap.

Monday's massive power outage also may have given investors more reason to cash in on recent gains, Yap said.

"The power outage probably added to the sentiment to take profit for the meantime until the market reach its support of 1250 points," said Yap.

Yap said he expects investors to resume accumulating stocks once the index reaches its support level. He pegged the index resistance at 1300.

AP, AFP

Senate. . . .

(From page B1)

billion that the government needed in foreign funding this year, it had already raised $505 million late last year. The government recently issued $750 million worth of 15-year global bonds at a time when spreads on Philippine borrowings were going down.

So far, the government has raised $1 billion of its requirements and Camacho said it only needed to borrow $500 million to $600 million this year to complete its external financing program.

He explained that a $117-million, one-year loan from dollar deposit units of locally operating banks secured in December would have to be re-financed late this year.

ETPI upgrades telecom network

By Abigail L. Ho

TELECOMMUNICATIONS firm Eastern Telecommunications Philippines Inc. is currently upgrading its network monitoring system to ensure better connection, less busy signals and less dropped calls.

"Through NetMon (network monitoring system), EasternTelecoms will be able to monitor in near-real time the congestion level of its trunk lines and measure call completion rate," ETPI vice president for operations Rene Castillo said.

He added that this move would make ETPI more competitive in customer service as well as technical capability. With its ongoing system upgrade, its line subscribers would soon encounter less busy signals and clearer connections.

"It's goodbye busy signals, hello to better connections for Eastern Telecoms line subscribers," he said.

The upgrade would also enable ETPI to provide traffic information to its Internet service provider (ISP) and virtual ISP clients, based on the take-up of their dial-up lines.

With this information, the ISPs would know when they need to have additional trunks installed. This would mean less busy signals for its users.

"This proactive response to our customers will enable them to maximize the use of their trunk facilities. In these highly competitive times, not only in telecommunications and Internet, but in all businesses as well, every bit of advantage for our clients can spell the difference between profit and being in the red," Castillo said.

Software for the upgrade is being provided by the Philippine arm of leading business-intelligence software and services provider SAS Institute Inc.

SAS Institute offers a complete suite of business-specific solutions to industries ranging from telecommunications to manufacturing to banking. It was founded in 1976 and currently serves more than 37,000 business, government and university sites in 111 countries worldwide.

Almost all of the Fortune 500 companies are SAS customers.

ETPI is one of the country's oldest telecommunications and Internet facilities providers. Aside from enhancing its network monitoring system, ETPI has also recently increased its broadband capacity to enable it to meet the growing demands of the ISP and corporate market for broadband connectivity.

ETPI has the biggest link to the Asian region.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Tuesday, January 22, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	25,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	65	65	62	63	402,800
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	17	17	17	17	1,000
Citystate Savings Bank	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	28.5	28.5	27.5	27.5	420,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	202	202	197	197	103,700
Philippine National Bank	64	65	64	65	8,400
Phil. Savings Bank	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	1,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.5	13.5	13	13	5,900
Security Bank Corp.	17	17.25	17	17.25	90,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	17	17	16.75	17	177,800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	100,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.35	480,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1260	1260	1260	1260	200
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1020	1020	1010	1020	13,200
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	27.5	28	27.5	28	61,100
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.45	0.46	0.44	0.46	2,250,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	670	670	660	660	22,830
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.027	0.029	0.027	0.029	8,600,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	30,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	8,000
Piltel	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.33	8,180,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	200,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	480	492.5	477.5	490	175,200
Ivantage Corp.	0.48	0.5	0.48	0.5	640,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.021	0.022	0.02	0.021	217,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	24.5	24.5	23.75	24	369,200
Manila Electric Co. B	34	36	34	36	2,422,000
Petron Corp.	1.9	1.92	1.84	1.92	12,002,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	140,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	3.05	2.7	2.95	21,444,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.33	0.36	0.33	0.36	460,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	1,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	190,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	3,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	352,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13	13	13	13	21,400
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	24.25	24.5	24.25	24.5	48,600
RFM Corp.	2.95	3	2.75	2.85	15,920,000
San Miguel Corp. A	44.5	44.5	44.5	44.5	37,100
San Miguel Corp. B	56.5	57	56.5	57	241,000
Universal Robina Corp.	4.45	4.5	4.4	4.5	344,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	7	7.5	7	7.5	3,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg. A	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.73	30,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg. B	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	10,000
Atok-Big Wedge Inc. B	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	1,000
Ayala Corp.	6	6.2	6	6.1	21,512,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	177,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	40,000
APC Group Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	126,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	200,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	8,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.58	0.67	0.58	0.66	58,250,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	10,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.0675	0.07	0.0675	0.07	2,100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.31	0.26	0.31	15,880,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.09	0.095	0.09	0.095	1,400,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	1,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.04	730,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	29.5	29.5	28.5	29	275,400
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	280,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.15	480,000
Ionics Inc.	7	7	7	7	13,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.54	1.56	1.54	1.54	846,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	25,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.016	0.018	0.016	0.018	2,100,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	1,200,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.78	0.8	550,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.34	4,850,000
Music Corp.	0.27	0.31	0.27	0.3	10,470,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.23	0.21	0.225	5,020,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	140,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.0775	0.0775	0.0775	0.0775	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.19	0.185	0.19	530,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	50,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	1,050,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	30,000
Metro Alliance Holdings-B	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	320,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	10,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	300,000
Pryce Corp.	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	3,000,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.43	0.44	670,000
Acesite Phils. Hotel Corp.	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	10,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.53	130,000
Manila Jockey Club	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	28	28.5	28	28.5	305,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	700	700	700	700	20
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.84	1.88	1.84	1.88	90,000
Globe Tel. A-Warrants	470	480	470	480	150
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	650	650	640	650	2,850
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	35,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,200
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.006	26,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	400	400	400	400	1,870
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.6	9,183,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.27	0.245	0.27	4,450,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.52	0.56	0.52	0.54	10,050,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.29	7,110,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.46	2.46	2.34	2.38	11,359,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	80,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.22	160,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.6	6.6	7,250,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	400,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	2.4	2.75	2.38	2.75	56,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.026	0.032	0.026	0.032	101,600,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	200,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.17	0.23	0.17	0.17	51,310,000
Omico Corp.	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	1,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.017	0.02	0.017	0.02	54,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	370,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.018	0.021	0.018	0.021	46,600,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	25,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	10,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.017	0.016	0.017	19,100,000

Disclosures

UNIWIDE Holdings Inc. said that although **Bank of the Philippine Islands** supported Uniwide's rehabilitation plan, the bank was seeking certain revisions on the proposed settlement terms.

* * *

LEPANTO Consolidated Mining Co. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 15, 4 p.m. at the Rigodon Ballroom of Peninsula Manila Hotel. Record date is on Feb. 20.

* * *

RFM Corp. declared a cash dividend of approximately P1.28 per share to shareholders of record as of Feb. 11, 2002. Payment shall be on Feb. 20. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Currencies

Jan. 22, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.130582	1.000000	51.2540
Japan	Yen	0.008529	0.007544	0.3867
United Kingdom	Pound	1.626343	1.438500	73.7289
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.144970	0.128226	6.5721
Switzerland	Franc	0.680376	0.601793	30.8443
Canada	Dollar	0.700311	0.619425	31.7480
Singapore	Dollar	0.616457	0.545256	27.9466
Australia	Dollar	0.581875	0.514668	26.3788
Bahrain	Dinar	2.999051	2.652661	135.9595
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.301489	0.266667	13.6678
Brunei	Dollar	0.614781	0.543774	27.8706
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000109	0.000096	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.025718	0.022748	1.1659
UAE	Dirham	0.307893	0.272331	13.9581
Korea	Won	0.000863	0.000763	0.0391
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.884500	45.3342
Brazil	Real	0.476035	0.421053	21.5807
Denmark	Kroner	0.134591	0.119046	6.1016
India	Rupee	0.023505	0.020790	1.0656
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.297561	0.263193	13.4897
Mexico	New Peso	0.123933	0.109619	5.6184
New Zealand	Dollar	0.478857	0.423549	21.7086
Norway	Kroner	0.126355	0.111761	5.7282
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018874	0.016694	0.8556
South Africa	Rand	0.099174	0.000763	0.0391
Sweden	Kroner	0.108206	0.095708	4.9054
Syria	Pound	0.025871	0.022883	1.1728
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032367	0.028629	1.4674
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001482	0.001311	0.0672

FMC inks $150-M deal with US bus firm

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FRANCISCO Motors Corp. (FMC) has signed a $150-million, three-year deal with giant bus maker American Transport Systems (ATS) for the assembly of Blue Bird Bus chassis and bodies in its Las Piñas factory.

FMC chair Fernando Francisco said the deal would provide the company "a new lease on life" after its ugly dispute with Mazda Corp. of Japan and Ford Motor Co. forced the pioneering Filipino vehicle assembler to shut down its assembly line of Mazda pickups and lay off 600 employees over the last two years.

Francisco said FMC would start manufacturing bus chassis in March this year while the assembly of built-up units to commence within six months. The project is expected to generate as much as P400 million in yearly sales in the domestic market. FMC is keen on exporting these buses in the region.

Based on the agreement, FMC and ATC will use its abandoned production line for Mazda. ATS will bring some FMC personnel in the US for training on the production of buses to ensure quality. Francisco said the buses would use Cummins diesel engines which are one of the cleanest in the world as it complies with the strict European standards.

The Blue Bird is widely used as commercial transport buses in the US including the trademark yellow school buses.

The ATS venture is the second partnership FMC made with a foreign investor since its split with Mazda. FMC had tied up with the Qinqi from mainland to produce motorcycle parts in the country. Qinqi is the biggest manufacturer of motorcycles in China.

FMC's two-decade partnership with Mazda crumbled in 1999 due to a bitter dispute concerning the introduction of Ford's Ranger pickups. FMC has an exclusive license to distribute Mazda B-series pickups in the country up to 2002 but this contract was ignored when the Ranger (which shared the same platform as the B-series) was introduced in the country.

Ford, on instruction from the Board of Investments, obtained FMC's consent to sell Rangers on condition that the Filipino assembler be given a new marketing agreement. Ford, which owns 30 percent of Mazda, did not live up to its end of the bargain which prompted FMC to withdraw its "No Objection Letter."

But when FMC asked the BOI to nullify Ford's registration (since the rules do not allow the registration of similar vehicles), the agency took the side of the American giant and ruled that the Ranger and B-series pickups were two distinct models.

FMC has decided to make his appeal directly to the President for help in getting just compensation for its efforts in building the Mazda brand in the country and losses incurred due to Ford and Mazda's machination to stop FMC from selling the B-series here.

Mazda has rejected FMC's compensation demand saying it was too high while Ford has insisted that the dispute was mainly between FMC and Mazda.

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UNDP sets aside ₱1.3B for poverty alleviation

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE UNITED Nations Development Program has earmarked some P1.35 billion to support the Philippines' poverty-alleviation program.

In an interview, National Economic and Development Authority Deputy Director General Gilbert Llanto said the UNDP would focus on four core areas—empowerment of the people, environmental sustainability, governance, and peace and order—from 2002 to 2004.

"(The UNDP) will finance programs and projects supportive of these goals," Llanto told the INQUIRER.

Working with governments and non-government organizations in 132 countries, the UNDP provides developing countries with knowledge-based consulting services and building national, regional and global coalitions for change.

At the UN Millennium Summit in September last year, world leaders pledged to cut poverty in half by 2015. The UNDP's task is to make sure that this goal is achieved.

The agency seeks to alleviate poverty through ways like the creation of economic opportunities, empowerment of women and protection of human rights, participatory approaches to government budgeting, and better delivery of social services.

In the case of governance, while the UNDP believes that democracy has made impressive gains worldwide over the past 25 years, challenges remain. Among these challenges is the development of political, legal and regulatory frameworks that will be more responsive to the needs of the people, especially the poor.

In the area of energy and the environment, the UNDP is leading the UN's effort to build national capacity for environmentally sustainable development by promoting global best practices and supporting catalytic interventions.

It believes environmental degradation hits the poor the hardest since they are vulnerable to problems such as water contamination, land erosion and air pollution. It also notes that the poor are also the ones in greatest need of access to clean and affordable energy.

Lastly, the support to peace-building and disaster mitigation is for countries that are now presented with violent conflicts or recurrent natural disasters that can erase decades of development progress and further entrench poverty and inequality.

In this regard, the UNDP seeks to support innovative approaches to crisis prevention, early warning and conflict resolution, assist in the coordination of international humanitarian assistance, and help bridge the gap between emergency relief and long-term development.

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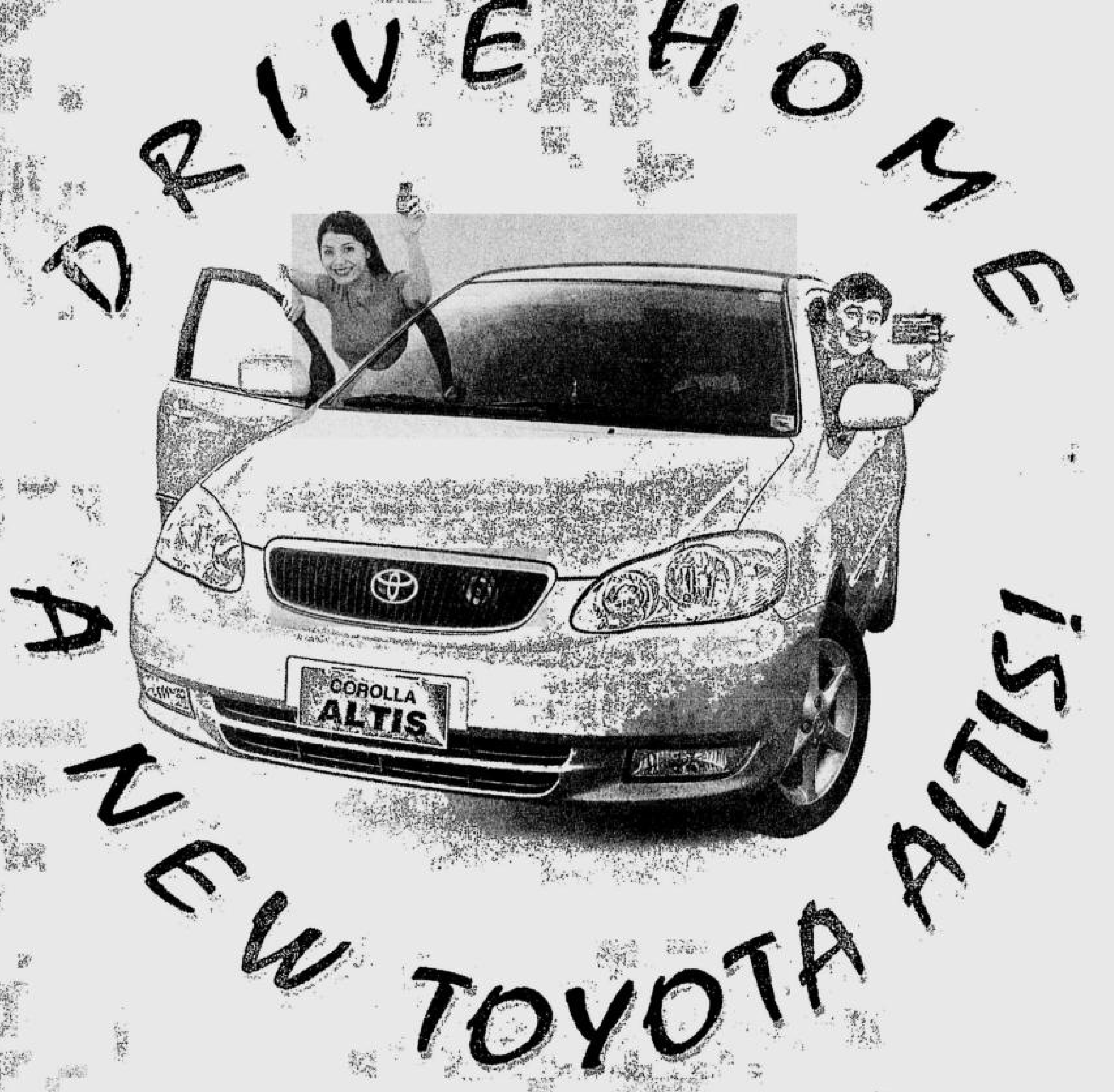

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GMA urged to stop auctions of imported used vehicles

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

LOCAL automotive parts makers are asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to implement the commitment it made during last year's economic summit to put the breaks on the growing number of public auctions of imported second-hand vehicles in the Subic Freeport and Bulacan.

Feliciano L. Torres, president of the Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association of the Philippines Inc. (MVPMAP), said that contrary to the Malacañang directive, "this activity continues and has even grown in scale."

Torres said that the unabated rise in the sale of used cars and commercial vehicles (imported mainly from Japan and converted to left-hand drive) would directly impact on the viability of the local auto parts industry, one of the country's potent export earners.

The auctions have led to lower sales of automotive parts to assemblers whose turnover has been gobbled up by the second-hand vehicles. Without a strong domestic base for their products, automotive parts makers are unlikely to sustain their assault in the foreign market. The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. has likewise urged for a halt to the auction of second-hand vehicles.

In a letter to Ms Macapagal, Torres noted that "so much effort has been spent and so many consultations have been conducted to address this issue" yet government authorities, specifically the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, have not shown signs of acting on the resolutions made in the economic summit.

In the National Socio-Economic Summit on Dec.10, the President approved a policy to immediately stop the importation of all kinds of used vehicles into the freeport and the public auctioning of the same.

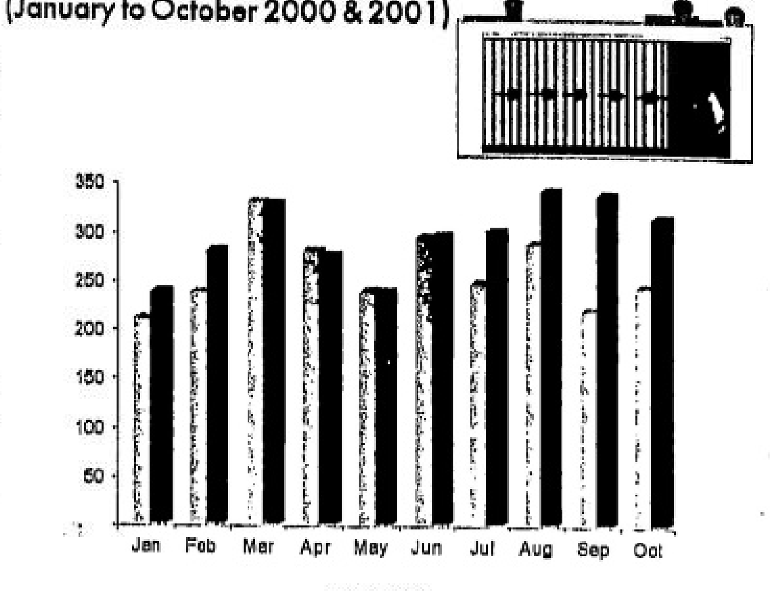
Torres said that government agencies should start implementing the President's directive soon to help local industries and attract more foreign investments in the country.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Establishment closures and retrenchments

(January to October 2000 & 2001)



Source: Bureau of Labor & Employment Statistics

THERE were 2,294 firms that either closed down permanently or retrenched workers as of October 2001. The figure is 19 percent higher than the reported number of cases in 2000. The number of affected workers last year reached 56,531. The manufacturing sector topped the list of reported closures/retrenchments at 654 firms followed bythe wholesale and retail trade sector at 438 firms.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

Ogami duped 10,000 Japanese investors, ex-associates claim

By Elena R. Torrijos

FORMER associates of G. Cosmos Philippines Inc. chair Genta Ogami claimed yesterday that Ogami, a self-styled cult leader, used Unitrust Development Bank to stall 10,000 Japanese investors who were seeking to recover from him about 15 billion yen (P7 billion) worth of investments.

In a news conference, Kensuke Inoue, former managing director of Ogami's Japan-based GO Group International, and Takashi Yoshioka, who worked for G. Cosmos' Japanese office and another unit of the GO Group, said Ogami turned to the Philippines because his companies had no money to pay Japanese investors who sank money in his mail order business.

Yoshioka said Ogami told his investors in Japan that they would get their money because he had invested in a Philippine bank and then used the bank's failure as a reason for not paying them.

Inoue revealed that part of the P505 million that Ogami used to acquire Unitrust came from the sale of fake corporate bonds of G. Cosmos Philippines to Japanese investors through G. Cosmos Japan Inc.

Inoue, who set up G. Cosmos Philippines and then went to Indonesia to set up G. Cosmos Indonesia Inc., said Ogami asked him to return to the Philippines to acquire a bank because Ogami had to settle some of his companies' obligations.

"So the GO Group borrowed money from investors and, to pay them back, would once again borrow money from other investors," Inoue said of Ogami's scheme.

Ogami has accused Inoue, former Unitrust president Francis Yuseco and others of embezzlement.

Yuseco warned, meanwhile, that Filipino investors in G. Cosmos Philippines could face a similar dilemma as their Japanese counterparts.

G. Cosmos will likely not be able to meet check payments to investors for placements maturing in February and March, he warned.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the newly created Anti-Money Laundering Council earlier advised Tokyo that Ogami's group might be using his businesses in the Philippines to launder dirty money from Japan.

Ogami was reported to have been convicted of mail fraud in Japan.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the anti-money laundering council believed Ogami was using his businesses to launder his earnings from the illegal sale of securities in the Philippines and Japan.

This, he suggested, could be the reason that he bought thrift bank Unitrust.

Ogami, through G. Universal Co. Ltd. and Minamoto Saiken Kaishu Co., acquired the bank in October last year from Group Management Corp., a company controlled by former Philippine Stock Exchange president Jose Luis Yulo, former Rizal Rep. Emigdio Tanjuatco and businessman Ed del Fonso.

The change in ownership and internal disputes following the acquisition led to a P138-million bank run that forced Unitrust, which had about 18,000 depositors, to shut down its 12 branches on Jan. 4.

Ogami was originally not listed as Unitrust's owners, but after a series of management revamps, he surfaced and claimed control of the bank.

Cargo handling fee rollback urged

THE COALITION for Shipping and Ports Modernization is calling for the rollback of the 10-percent across-the-board increase in cargo handling fees implemented on Feb. 1 last year.

In a statement, the coalition claimed the increase was railroaded by the Philippine Ports Authority which approved the increase even before the affected parties could submit their formal opposition.

CSPM also called for the withdrawal of the 10 percent additional increase imposed by the Manila International Container Terminal and South Harbor on Jan. 12 this year for lack of legal basis and transparency.

The rate increases, according to coalition spokesperson Vicente Gambito, runs counter to the Macapagal administration's commitment to reduce cargo handling and transport costs in the country.

Meneleo Carlos Jr., chair of the transportation committee of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the cargo rate increases would greatly affect the cost of living in the Philippines as the rate adjustments will eventually be passed on to consumers.

Carlos' views were shared by Cora Curay, president of the Distribution Management Association of the Philippines, who said that DMAP members might eventually be forced to pass on the cargo rate increase to consumers if there would be no rollback.

GOINGS-ON

ETPI's network monitoring system

TO ENHANCE its competitive edge in customer service and technical capability, Eastern Telecommunications Phils. Inc. is upgrading its Network Monitoring (NetMon) System.

The system enables ETPI to monitor in near-real time the congestion level of its trunk lines and measure call completion rate, company vice president for operations Rene Castillo said.

At the same time, Eastern Telecoms will be able to provide traffic information to Internet Service Providers (ISP) and Virtual ISP clients based on the occupancy of their dial-up lines, telling them if they need additional trunks.

Eli Lilly execs in Manila

TOP officials of Eli Lilly and Co. arrived in Manila yesterday to discuss the performance of the company's pharmaceutical products in the local market. The visit is part of the regular meeting with local affiliates in the Asian operations.

The Eli Lilly and Co. officials are Lorenzo Tallarigo, president of intercontinental operations; Gregory B. Brickler, vice president of human resources for global pharmaceutical operations, and Richard Allan Smith, president for Asia and China operations.

Tallarigo heads the company's intercontinental operations that cover most of the world except for the United States, Western Europe and Japan.

Carlos B. Raymond Jr., general manager of Lilly Philippines, will lead the local team who will discuss the company's local operations with the top Lily officials.

Eli Lily's key products in the country are Zyprexa (olanzapine), (cefaclor), Gemzar (gemcitabine hydrochloride), Humulin (human insulin of recombinant DNA origin) and Evista (raloxifene hydrochloride).

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P12

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

Fleming cuts Kmart supplies

DALLAS—Kmart Corp.'s troubles escalated Monday when its primary food and consumables supplier cut off most shipments due to the troubled discounter's failure to make its regular weekly payment.

Fleming Cos., based in suburban Dallas, said Kmart owed it $78 million.

Fleming is the latest large supplier to have stopped shipping to Kmart to reduce its risk if the company files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

Scotts Co., a maker of lawn and garden products, decided last week that it would delay shipments to Kmart. Meanwhile, many smaller suppliers stopped shipping or demanded cash on delivery.

However, the latest development poses the biggest crisis for the discounter, whose grocery offerings drive traffic. Kmart is already faced with increasingly bare shelves.

"It's one thing if you don't have T-shirts or lawn products. You can live without the deliveries for a week or so, but you can't sell yesterday's wilted lettuce," said Kurt Barnard, president of Barnard's Retail Trend Report, based in Montclair, NJ. "The company is fast approaching the end of its available options—either to file for bankruptcy or extend its financing. Something has to happen very fast."

Barnard said Fleming's action could further undermine confidence among vendors, prompting more suppliers to stop shipping to Kmart.

Kmart officials could not be reached on Monday.

Meanwhile, Charles Conaway, Kmart's chief executive, said in a statement Monday that the company was hopeful business would resume with Fleming "once we work through these financial issues."

Kmart has been on a downward spiral since announcing on Jan. 10 that it did no better than break even for fiscal 2001 because of disappointing holiday sales. It said it was in discussions with its lenders about its financing.

Ratings agencies downgraded Kmart's credit, its stock plunged and the company was removed from Standard & Poor's benchmark index of 500 leading stocks. There has been widespread speculation of a bankruptcy filing, but company officials have declined to comment.

Last Thursday, Kmart removed its president and named turnaround specialist James Adamson as its new chair, replacing Conaway, who remained as chief executive. The management changes were in an effort to gain confidence of lenders, suppliers and investors.

But Kmart's continued silence about its financing plans is increasingly angering suppliers.

"They're not doing an effective job in communicating to their vendors," said an executive with a toy manufacturer, whose business with Kmart accounted for less than 10 percent of the company's total sales. The executive wanted to remain anonymous.

He added that the toymaker was holding off on shipments and said in a better economic climate, he would have been more accommodating. However, in the wake of a string of bankruptcies, including Ames Department Stores and Zany Brainy, the executive said he just could not afford to take any risks. "We've been nailed too much," he said. *AP*

Kmart Corp. bankruptcy seen soon

NEW YORK—Discount retailer Kmart Corp. was expected to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection as soon as Tuesday, the New York Times and Wall Street Journal reported, citing advisers to the company and people familiar with the situation.

Kmart, based in Troy, Michigan, did not return phone calls seeking comment.

The newspapers said Kmart's board met on Monday night to put the finishing touches on about $2 billion in debtor-in-possession financing, which would allow the company to continue operating while restructuring.

Analysts foresee Kmart closing 250 to 500 stores, the newspapers said.

Kmart's plight worsened on Monday when its grocery supplier, Fleming Cos. Inc suspended shipments after Kmart failed to make a regular weekly payment. Fleming is seeking to reclaim $78 million worth of goods already shipped but not paid for.

Scotts Co., a maker of lawn and garden products, also said it stopped shipments to all Kmart stores, except for certain perishable food products that were already in transit. *Reuters*

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US offers to help lift Japan out of recession

TOKYO—The United States will do everything possible to help lift Japan out of recession, while reiterating a pledge of solid economic growth at home by the end of the year, top officials said Tuesday.

"(US Treasury Secretary Paul) O'Neill expressed hopes that Japan should boost the economy and he told me the US administration will offer all possible assistance for the Japanese government's efforts on the economy," Finance Minister Masajuro Shiokawa told reporters after talks with his US counterpart.

"I explained Japan's financial situation and told him there may be a time when the (Bank of Japan) needs to increase liquidity into the banking system," he said.

"We think continued monetary easing is needed to prevent a turmoil in liquidity provision."

The government would decide whether to provide Japan with a further fiscal stimulus during a 150-day parliament session, which started Monday, he added.

Tokyo has already approved a 2.7 trillion-yen ($22.3-billion) supplementary budget for the fiscal year to March and submitted the draft for a second extra package to parliament Monday worth a further 2.5 trillion yen.

O'Neill said foreign exchange levels should be left to the market to decide, raising speculation Washington would tolerate a further weakening of the yen, which pushed the dollar to a new three-year high.

"His comment was taken to mean the United States accepted the current weak yen," said Kazuhiro Kaneko, a dealer at Mizuho Trust Bank.

Both O'Neill and Shiokawa said Monday they would not discuss foreign exchange movements. The yen has lost around 10 percent in value over the last few weeks. *AFP*

ADB, World Bank sign accord

MANILA—The Asian Development Bank and the World Bank have agreed to improve cooperation in providing assistance to the Asia-Pacific region, the ADB said Tuesday.

The memorandum of understanding will set up a framework for closer coordination and an improved division of labor between the two multilateral institutions including closer consultation on country assistance strategies, an ADB statement said.

It would also eliminate duplication of efforts, harmonize operational procedures and improve effectiveness, the Philippines-based ADB said.

Part of this accord includes the implementation of a joint "Protocol on Collaboration among Multilateral Development Banks/IMF (International Monetary Fund)" for preparing poverty reduction strategies, the ADB added without elaborating on the role of the IMF.

The signing of the memorandum is "a starting point for the two institutions to work towards deeper collaboration, improved coordination and less duplication in serving their Developing Member Countries," the ADB said. *AFP*

China likely to be Asian leader in foreign direct investment–UN

GENEVA—China is expected to emerge as the Asian country to have attracted the most foreign direct investment last year, the UN Conference on Trade and Development reported here Monday.

Unctad said its estimates showed that FDI, in the form of either mergers, acquisitions or the creation of new ventures, came to $46.8 billion (53 billion euros) in 2001.

The agency added that China should continue to top the FDI table in the years ahead because of its formal admission to the World Trade Organization last Dec. 11.

In doing so, China will eclipse Hong Kong, where foreign direct investment last year declined by nearly half its level of $64 billion in 2000.

The Unctad study found that for South Korea, China was now a more attractive investment outlet than the United States.

A report from Japan's external trade organization, cited by Unctad, said a quarter of Japan's multinational corporations were about to or have already boosted their stakes in China.

The Japanese electronics concern Hitachi Corp., for example, intends to invest $800 million over the next five years in China and to increase the value of its production there to $4 billion a year.

In addition, nearly 2 percent of Japanese multinationals operating in members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations are contemplating closing down their operations there and moving to China.

Elsewhere in Asia, according to Unctad, South Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia saw a decline in foreign direct investment last year. The level was roughly unchanged in Thailand and Taiwan.

For all of Asia, foreign direct investment declined from $144 billion in 2000 to $124 billion in 2001. *AFP*

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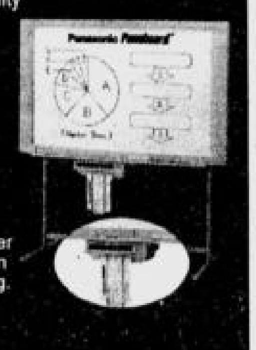

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A Better Investment Alternative

A new year has just begun, and you are in the mood to look over all the things you have done (and have not done) in the past year. Hopefully included in your list is a review of your financial status. Here are two questions to help you get started:

Question Number One: How much did my money earn last year? Most traditional savings and investment products last year generated returns of between 1.6% to 9% net per annum (average range of bank returns for 2001). With the release of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' inflation rate for December, the average inflation rate for 2001 could finally be computed - a whopping 6%. What does this mean? This means you have actually earned real interest only if you got more than 6% net on your money. Otherwise, you cannot really say that your money has grown. This brings us to the next question:

Question Number Two: How could I have earned more money? Well, if you are an investment savvy person, you probably could have managed your own portfolio. Otherwise, the next best thing you could have done is to have gone around comparing promised returns of various banks and financial institutions. But then, as mentioned earlier, most savings and investment products generated only 1.6% to 9% net returns. One type of investment instrument that's relatively new to the Filipino is the mutual fund. Mutual funds pool money from various investors and place these in a variety of securities. Different mutual funds have different investment objectives, which are disclosed to the potential client prior to the sale so they can judge whether or not a certain fund is right for them.

So, you want to know what did well? Bond mutual funds (or just bond funds) did well. One particular bond fund, in fact did very well. The Sun Life Prosperity Bond Fund outperformed not only the industry benchmark - the 91 day T-Bill-but outperformed all other bond funds in the Philippine market as well. It was the best performing bond fund in 2001, consistently topping competitors on a monthly basis, and registering a net investment return of 10.5136% by year-end.

The Sun Life Prosperity Bond Fund belongs to the family of the Sun Life Prosperity Funds. The other funds are the Sun Life Prosperity Balanced Fund and the Sun Life Prosperity Philippine Equity Fund. These two funds did well too, outperforming their respective benchmarks by a wide margin.

The Sun Life Prosperity Funds are managed and distributed by Sun Life Asset Management Company, Inc. (SLAMC), a member of the Sun Life Financial group of companies. The Sun Life Financial name is well-known in the Philippines for its life insurance services, but unknown to most, the Sun Life Financial group of companies is a stellar organization with years of experience in the business not only in risk protection but in wealth accumulation as well.

In fact, Massachusetts Financial Services - of *"we invented the mutual fund"* fame in the United States - is a member of the Sun Life Financial family as well. Other member companies include McLean Budden, one of Canada's oldest investment counselling firms, and Spectrum Investments, also one of Canada's top 20 mutual fund companies and manager of Canada's oldest equity mutual fund. With such a strong tradition of expertise to draw from, small wonder that the Sun Life Prosperity Funds have come a long way in less than two years in the Philippines.

Such investment expertise is only one of the things that differentiate the Sun Life Prosperity Funds from other mutual funds. Another is the commitment of the fund managers to the Funds' shareholders by making sure that each client is thoroughly briefed on what mutual funds are and whether or not these are the right investment instruments for them. Sun Life Financial, for instance, has required all new clients to fill out a Client Profile Questionnaire - an invaluable tool devised by a group of psychologists to help determine an individual's investment objectives, risk profile, and investment time horizon. With the weightings reviewed by Towers Perrin (an international management consultancy firm), it is evident that Sun Life Financial desires only the very best for their clients.

According to SLAMC President Rolando Robles, Sun Life Financial ensures that only authorized mutual fund representatives are allowed to sell the Funds, after undergoing rigorous training and an intensive exam for the procurement of the license. True to form, however, Sun Life Financial goes one step further. In March of 2001, the first batch of the Mutual Fund Investment Planners was born. These are the licensed mutual fund representatives who have received thorough training and workshop exposure in the workings of stocks, bonds, and investment planning - all for the purpose of giving good, competent advice to their clients, not only about the Funds, but about other investment instruments as well.

As of December 2001, there was a total of 109 Mutual Fund Investment Planners certified by Sun Life Financial.

Rolly Robles says that the mission of the investment managers of the Sun Life Prosperity Funds is simple: "We help people attain financial freedom". With highly-qualified mutual fund representatives, a world-class investment team, and a responsive fund manager, this mission is as good as done.

For more information on the Sun Life Prosperity Funds, please call ***849-9999.***

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the **MESALA account** of the late **Francisco P. Jaudian Jr.** has been extrajudicially partitioned among his heirs per Doc. No. 451, Page No.92, Book No. 19, Series of 2001 before Notary Public Atty. Warlito C. Buenavista of Manila PDI-Jan. 23, 30 & Feb. 6, 2002

NOTICE OF LOSS

Globe Telecom Inc. Warrants Certificate No. 000144 for 4,936 shares registered in the name of Mercury Group of Companies, Inc. and Stock Certificate No. 000132 for 5,142 shares registered in the name of M.E. Holding Corporation.
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The sisters and family of the late

CARLOS LIVIOCO GERONIMO

who passed away on January 10, 2002 at the age of 89

wish to thank all of you who, by way of your presence, flowers, thoughts and prayers, joined and supported us in honouring his memory and celebrating his life.

ORENDAIN OCAMPO BUTED

Passed away on November 22, 2001 at Los Angeles, California at the age of 65.

Judge Erlinda Pestaño Buted in behalf of the family thanks all those who condoled with them in their hour of bereavement especially UP Law Class '59 and Ilocos Norte Alpha Phi Beta Fraternity based in Los Angeles, CA High School Class '53. Masses are offered for the repose of his soul at the following churches:

St. Francis Brendan Catholic Church, 3rd Street, Los Angeles, CA, January 23 at 8:00 AM
Our Lady of Loretto Church, Union Street, Los Angeles, CA, January 23 at 5:00 PM
Sta. Cecilia Church, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, January 25 at 5:00 PM
Good Shepherd Parish, Fairview, Quezon City, January 26 at 7:00 PM
Holy Sacrifice, UP Diliman, Quezon City, January 27 at 6:30 PM

P/CINSP. ROY M CRUZ

of Tondo, Manila

Joined his Creator on January 20, 2002 at the age of 33.

His bereaved wife **Malou**; children **Katherine Gisselle** and **Kimberly Roie**; parents **Berting & Angeling**, **Luis & Erlina**; brothers, sisters and in-laws **Rody & Auring**, **Rene & Es**, **Robert & Zeny**, **Roger & Lorna**, and **Tess**, **Mike & Joy**, **Matt & Minnie**, **Jun & Tess**, **Noel & Vangie**, and **Angel**; nephews and nieces, other relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for his journey to eternal life.

His remains lie in state at the Lorenzo Memorial Chapel at Nicolas Zamora Street, (Sande Street), Tondo, Manila.

Interment will be on January 26, 2002 at 8:00 AM and will hold Mass at 10:30 AM at Ever Memorial Gardens, Lawang Bato, Valenzuela City.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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ATTY. EMMANUEL R. ROWAN

of Banga Aklan and Quezon City

Passed away peacefully in the Grace of the Lord on January 19, 2002 at the age of 70.

His bereaved wife **Nona Lopez-Rowan**; children **Lilli Ann (Bing)** and **April Lara**; and the rest of the family request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel C 1, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Daily Masses will be said at 7:00 PM. Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, January 26, 2002 at 2:00 PM. Interment will follow at Himlayang Pilipino, Quezon City.

The family of the late

LEOPOLDO "LODY" DE CASTRO

who passed away on January 22, 2002 at the age of 52.

Wishes to inform relatives and friends that his body lies in state at Chapel 6, La Funeraria Paz Inc., G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, January 26, 2002 at La Funeraria Paz Inc. Crematory after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Chapel 6.

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INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The LGU of Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi has received a loan from ADB thru the DAR for the const. of rural infra projects. The LGU of Sitangkai, thru the Local Chief Executive invites contractors classified by and registered with Inter-Agency Committee on Registration and Classification of contractors (ICRC) as Medium Class "A" to apply for pre-qualification to submit bid for the project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LENGTH	LOCATION
• Concreting of Talisay-Pamalikan Farm to Market Road	3.35 kms.	Talisay, Sibutu, Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi

BUDGET COST: Php 12,289,965.96

The contractor shall furnish the necessary materials, labor and equipment needed to complete the project.

That the unskilled labor portion required for the project must be secured in from the available manpower of the community where the project be implemented.

The pre-qualification and bid documents are available for issuance to prospective bidders at the BAC Secretariat, MPDC Office of Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi upon presentation of Letter of Intent and original copies of contractor's License and Registration and payment of non-refundable fee of THREE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED (Php 3,500.00) PESOS ONLY as bidders fee.

Duly accomplished Pre-qualification Statement and Price Bid Proposals for the project in a sealed envelope shall be submitted to the PBAC Secretariat not later than **February 25, 2002** at Sibutu Municipal Hall, Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi.

All participating contractors shall be notified of the results of the evaluation of their Pre-C's, the date and time of the opening of the bids. Pre-qualified contractors, shall submit the amount not less than 5% bid securities of their total bid price during the opening of the sealed bids, while disqualified contractors will receive back their sealed proposals.

All particulars relative to the pre-qualification, bid bonds, performance bonds, pre-bid conference, bid evaluation and award of contract shall be governed by the implementing Rules and Regulation of PD 1594, as amended.

The Local Government of Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi, reserve the rights to reject any or all bid proposal, waive any required formally or defect contained therein and award the contract to the bidder whose proposal evaluated is deemed most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **TIBLAN C. AHAJA**
Municipal Mayor

(PDI - Jan. 14, 18 & 23, 2002)

INQUIRER TRIVIA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

20-20

Q. What does '20-20 vision' mean? Why '20'?

A. The first number in your visual acuity grade is always 20. That's because the 20 is a reference to the distance you are standing or sitting from the eye chart. The distance is not a coincidence. Rays of light are just about parallel 20 feet from the eye chart, so that the muscle controlling the shape of the lens in a normal eye is in a state of relative rest when viewing the chart. Ideally, your eyes should be operating under optimal conditions during the eye test. The second number represents the distance at which a normal person should be able to see the letters on that line. The third from the bottom line on most eye charts is the 20-20 line. If you can see the letters on that line, you have 20-20 ('normal') vision.

For the Record. A second higher number indicates your vision is subnormal. If you have a 20-50 vision, you can discern letters that 'normal' observers could see from more than twice as far away, 50 feet. If you achieve the highest score on the acuity test, a 20-10, you can spot letters that a normal person could detect only if he or she were 50% closer.

Name Game. **Isuzu.** The name of the Japanese automotive company derives from the sacred Isuzu River near Japan's oldest shrine, the Ise Shrine of Mie prefecture, about 100 km south of Nagoya. The Isuzu logo is called "The Pillars of Excellence," composed of two four-sided polygons that are side by side with pointy sides outside, mirroring each other.

WORD WATCH

Kotse : from the Spanish *coche*, "coach; carriage; car."

PDI – January 23, 2002

National Power Corporation

January 17, 2002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

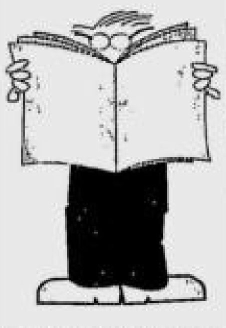
1. Project: MRCC-2001-01, Construction of Mindanao Regional Control Center Building at Carmen Substation, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City (Back-up System).
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all materials, labor, tools, equipment and supervision for the construction of the Mindanao Regional Control Center Building.

   Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid: P50,000,000.00
3. Application for Eligibility is open to all Filipino Contractors with the following valid License and Registration Particulars issued by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB).

   License Particular: **At least AA - General Building**
   Registration Particular: **At least Large A - Building & Industrial Plant**
4. Application for Eligibility (legal, technical and financial documents and statements) shall be evaluated using the "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by NPC in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding; and shall be subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
5. Application for Eligibility and Eligibility Forms will be available for issuance starting **January 23, 2002** at the Bids & Contracts Management Department Office, Second Floor, Building No. 2, NPC-OBC, National Power Corporation, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-2308 upon presentation of Letter of Intent, original PCAB and payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) per copy.
6. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibillity, Eligibility Forms, documents and statements shall be on **February 25, 2002** and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is declared a non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. NPC reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
8. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **A.T. CORPUZ**
Chairman
Contracts Award Committee

(PDI – Jan. 23, 26 & Feb. 6, 2002)



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Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION
Office of the Management Team
Diversion, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija
Telephone No. (044) 311-2135
Telefax No. (044) 486-3668

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

NEA Management Team (NMT) invites suppliers to apply for pre-qualification and if subsequently found qualified to bid for the SUPPLY AND DELIVERY of the following timber materials intended for the construction of electrical line (14.7 kms.) of Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) Stock Farm at Gen. Tinio, Nueva Ecija:

200 pcs. - Poles, 35'
150 pcs. - Anchor Logs, 8" x 4"
370 pcs. - Cross Arms, 3½" x 4½" x 8"

Pre-bid will be on February 4, 2002 at exactly 10:00 a.m. at NMT Main Office, Diversion, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija. For additional inquiries, please call the PBAC Secretariat at Cellphone Nos. (0918) 755-0932 or (0917) 944-7123.

(Sgd.) **JOSE V. CABANELA**
NMT-PBAC Chairman

(PDI – Jan. 23, 24 & 25, 2002)

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Republic of the Philippines
City of Davao
PREQUALIFICATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Tel. No. 225-0715

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The City Government of Davao, thru the City Prequalification Bids and Awards Committee, invites contractors, classified as "Medium A" and registered with the Inter-agency Committee on Registration and Classification of Contractors to apply for prequalification and listed in the PBAC Roster of prequalified contractors to submit bids for the projects funded under the Department of Agrarian Reform - Asian Development Bank and the City Government of Davao:

Project Title	Appropriation
■ Improvement of Farm-To-Market Road of Dallaon Plantation from Barangay Hall to Purok 5, Toril District	P 11,606,122.71
■ Improvement of Farm-To-Market Road of Dallaon Plantation, Purok 5 to Purok 6A, Toril District	7,056,252.76
■ Improvement of ARC Road from Purok 3 to 5, Tamayong, Calinan District	11,012,272.29
■ Improvement of ARC Road from Purok 5 to 6, Tamayong, Calinan District	7,150,636.14

Prequalification documents, Pro-forma Letter of Intent, Plans and bid forms are available for sale to prospective bidders at the PBAC Technical Committee, Office of the City Planning and Development Coordinator, Annex A-1, City Hall, Davao City, not later than 5:00 PM on **February 4, 2002** to those contractors prequalified by the PBAC.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished prequalification statements shall be on **February 8, 2002** up to 5:00 PM.

Dates of submission and opening of bids are as follows:

Pre-Bid Conference - **February 22, 2002**, 10:00 AM
Submission of Bids (Deadline) - **February 26, 2002**, 5:00 PM
Opening of Bids - **February 27, 2002**, 10:00 AM

Prequalified contractors interested to bid shall drop their 1st and 2nd envelopes in the bid box at the PBAC Technical Working Committee, Office of the City Planning and Development Coordinator, City Hall, Davao City, on the date and time stated above. Bid securities in an amount not less than two and half percent (2½%) of their total bid price proposals shall be placed in the 1st bid envelope. The sealed bid envelopes shall be addressed to the PBAC Chairman, with the name of the project to be bidded and the name of the bidder in capital letters, and they shall be marked "Do not open before (date and time of bid opening)."

Pre-Bid Conference and opening of bids shall be held at the Conference Room, Office of the City Mayor, City Hall, Davao City, on the date and time stated above.

The PBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality/defect contained therein, and to award to the bidder whose bid, as evaluated by the PBAC, is the most advantageous to the city government.

Approved:

(Sgd.) **LEO G. DELOS SANTOS**
City Administrator
Authorized Representative of the Mayor

(PDI – Jan. 23, 2002)

People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Editor aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

SM cited for anti-piracy efforts at filmfest

AS THE BIG winners were proclaimed at the 27th Metro Manila Film Festival, SM Cinema was also honored with several awards for its cooperation with the government's efforts against piracy and pornography, as well as its unwavering support for the film festival.

This was the first year that cinema houses were cited at the film festival, which traditionally gives awards to films, filmmakers and artists.

The Video Regulatory Board honored SM's chair and founder Henry Sy, Sr. for "his unwavering support and cooperation to the efforts of the government to fight video piracy and pornography by ensuring all SM Malls sell only genuine and legitimate videogram."

The Video Regulatory Board's chair and CEO lawyer Lualhati Buenafe, vice chair Marilen Dinglasan and VRB executive director Joseph Antonoie Soil presented the award to SM's senior AVP Ric Camaligan, who accepted the award in behalf of Henry Sy, Sr.

The SM Cinema was also honored with a plaque of recognition for its "full cooperation to the Metro Manila Film Festival from 1975 to 2000." Apart from its unwavering support to Metro Manila Film Festival during its yearly run, SM Cinema has also spearheaded the simultaneous screenings of filmfest entries at SM's provincial malls in 2001. This was a first, and significantly promoted the film festival not only in Metro Manila, but also around the country.

In line with this, the SM Centerpoint Cinema was also given recognition being the First Day Top Grosser during this year's film festival.

'WINNING A BMW WITH CALTEX' TURNOVER

Vilma Soriano of Pampanga won a brand new BMW 318i in Caltex's 'Winning a BMW with Caltex' raffle promo. Vilma, a kerosene reseller, plans to sell the BMW to buy her own house. Shown with Vilma are (from left) Renan Lacson, brand manager; Jonathan Espino, procurement officer; Abner Alcantara, BMW sales representative; Vilma's husband; Noli Duran, district manager for Luzon North; Ed Galang and his wife (winners of retailer incentive), and Peter Ungson, field manager.

MEGAWORLD CITED FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SUPPORT

Megaworld Foundation, the socio-civic arm of premier property developer Megaworld Corp., was recently commended for its support of the conservation programs of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) during the latter's fifth anniversary celebration held at the Asian Institute of Management Conference Center. Megaworld is the first Filipino company to become a conservation ally of the international environment group that aims to preserve natural habitats in the country and around the world. Shown is Cirilo Manlangit (right), Megaworld Foundation president and Megaworld Corp. executive vice president, receiving a token of appreciation from WWF Phils. trustee Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II. Looking on are fellow WWF Phils. trustees Horacio Morales (left) and Ernesto Garilao. Aside from environmental conservation, Megaworld Foundation is involved in worthwhile causes, including college scholarships and medical assistance for street children and the disabled.

MONA LISA SCHOOL'S FAMILY DAY

The Mona Lisa School of Pasig City, headed by school directress Mona Lisa
shall be holding a family day on Jan. 25 at Rosario 5 and 6 Covered Courts.
elementary and elementary educations. Shown with Acosta are the school's faculty and staff.

FUJI XEROX REGIONAL HEADS VISIT PHILIPPINE OFFICE

Philippine Fuji Xerox Corp. (PFXC) recently gave a warm welcome to two of its top regional leaders, president Haruhiko Yoshida and business planning general manager Kimihiro Hirosue, both of whom are based at the Fuji Xerox Asia Pacific (FXAP) regional head office in Singapore. Yoshida and Hirosue met with PFXC's executive committee and management in Manila to discuss the new 'Services and Solutions' strategy of providing clients with advanced digital document management hardware and software products. Shown are (seated, from left) Toshikatsu Kanaoka, EVP for marketing and business operations; Romy Serrano, PFXC president; Haruhiko Yoshida, FXAP president; lawyer Joe Santos-Bisquera, PFXC EVP and CFO; Yoshikatsu Matsumura, PFXC vice president for production, service and logistics; and (standing, center) Kimihiro Hirosue, FXAP general manager for business planning, together with the other local executive committee staff members.

CFA review course at AIM

The Governor Jose B. Fernandez Jr. Center for Banking in Finance (JBF Center) offers the 2002 Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Level I Review Course. The CFA designation is an internationally recognized standard of excellence and professionalism. Conducted annually by the Association for Investment Management and Research (AIMR) – an international organization that examines candidates and awards the CFA designation – the CFA program is administered in more than 70 countries worldwide. Today, Charter holders are respected and knowledgeable professionals in the investment management field.

Since 1998, the JBF Center has been conducting CFA Review Courses for Level I candidates. Known for its above-board consistency and performance, the Center's lineup of lecturers are composed entirely of professors of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Asia's most prestigious graduate school of business. In the last 2001 CFA Level I examination, 70 percent of those who took the course passed, surpassing the 49-percent worldwide average reported by the AIMR.

The review course will be from Jan. 29 to April 30, 15 sessions covering quantitative methods, ethics, markets and instruments, corporate finance, portfolio management and equity, debt, derivative and alternative investments. Except for the simulated exam (Session 14), all sessions will be held every Tuesday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Meralco Caseroom, AIM Building.

For details, call Gary Pigon of the JBF Center at 750-1010 local 2100/2101 or e-mail rpigon@dataserve.aim.edu.ph.

Gift Gate brings superstar pens under one roof

THE WORLD'S most popular pen brands are now certified Gift Gate Gallery residents. Parker and Waterman pens are now available at Stars@Gift Gate Gallery on the Ground Floor of Glorietta II, Ayala Center Makati. Stars@Gift Gate Gallery is a specialized retail concept within Gift Gate Gallery that serves as both a one-stop shop for the best art supplies and a showroom for two of the world's most desired pen brands.

Stars@Gift Gate Gallery houses the most comprehensive selection of Waterman and Parker pens. Pen enthusiasts will marvel at the beautiful *objets d'art* on display: stylish and African-inspired Waterman Serenite, with a slightly curved body that cradles nicely in the hand; the heavily filigreed Snake Pen, a collector's favorite and Parker's legendary showpiece; the cigar-shaped Waterman Edson, acknowledged as one of the most luxurious pens money can buy; and other pen ranges that will suit your discriminating taste and budget.

Aside from Waterman and Parker, this pens, paper and paints boutique lives up to its name. It showcases prestigious brands of paper, pens and paints such as Caran d'Ache art materials from Switzerland, Lefranc & Bourgeios art supplies from France, Conqueror and Canson paper. And there's more. Stars@Gift Gate Gallery is also home to the new line of Parker pens in Hello Kitty designs, Sanrio stationeries and "Wrap it up!," Gift Gate's corner for wrapping goods by the meter.

Stars@Gift Gate Gallery was conceptualized by Star Paper Corp., local distributor of Parker and Waterman, and Gift Gate Inc., exclusive licensee of Hello Kitty and other Sanrio products. So, if you're wishing to find the right pen for the right person and the right occasion, just drop by Stars@Gift Gate Gallery in Glorietta where you're sure to find a constellation of art and writing supplies.

BITS & Clips

San Beda HS 77 grand homecoming

SAN BEDA HS Class '77 is sponsoring this year's Grand Alumni Homecoming on Feb. 23 to be held at the San Beda quadrangle in Mendiola. Dubbed "San Beda: Sandaan at Isa, Nagkakaisa!," the festivities will start at 3 p.m. with a concelebrated mass. A grand show featuring celebrities, raffle prizes and special awards will follow. All Bedan alumni and friends are invited to join in the fun and camaraderie. SBC HS Class '77 jubilarians are enjoined to call Joji Garcia at 732-0303 or Dennis Arce at 363-2430 or e-mail vitec88@yahoo.com.

Derma Prime sponsors spa seminar Jan. 29

DERMA PRIME, a leading world-class dermatology care producer from Switzerland, will sponsor a seminar on beauty and relaxation treatments on Jan. 29 at the Hotel Rembrandt, 26 Tomas Morato Avenue, Quezon City. The course will focus on new techniques on spa services, facial and body therapy. All local beauty experts, dermatologists, doctors and spa operators are invited. Certificates will be issued. Look for Gara at 410-7097 or 372-9919.

Digital photos of Manila sights

UPTREND Business Center has produced and released a compact disc, "Manila Sights and Scenes: A Digital Folio in Progress." This first-of-its-kind CD contains more than 350 digital photographs of historical landmarks and tourist spots in Metro Manila. The tourist attractions featured include the Rizal Monument, Luneta Park, Intramuros, Manila Bay, Cry of Balintawak, Quezon Memorial, Manila and Quezon city halls, Manila Cathedral, Quiapo Church, Edsa Shrine, San Sebastian Church, University of Santo Tomas, Pasig River, city skylines, commercial establishments and various street scenes. The compact disc incorporates a software that automatically shows the pictures in sequence as in a slide presentation. The digital photographs were taken by Tomas J. Ranada. For more information, call 928-3464 or e-mail uptrend@pacific.net.ph.

CULINARY EXPO 2001

RFM's White King was one of the major participants in the recently concluded 'Culinary, Kitchen and Food Expo' held in SM Megamall's Megatrade Hall recently. Aside from having its grand booth and the usual product selling and sampling for its hotcake mixes, White King organized fun activities for parents and kids, supervised by none other than the well-loved White King mascot. The event's highlight was the 'White King Game Zone,' wherein parents and their kids participated in fun games and contests like 'Jazz Up Your Classic Hotcake' and 'White King Hotcake Eating Contest.' Cooking demonstrations were also held featuring different hotcakes recipes: White King Chocolate Logs, White King Peaches and Cream Waffles. The event, a gathering of the country's top food companies like RFM, Ajinomoto, Campbell's, Tefal and First Choice Marketing, was attended by culinary enthusiasts and some well-respected guests like Senator Edgardo Angara and cooking icon Sylvia Reynoso-Gala.

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WAVE 89.1

POWERPOOL NIGHTS CONTRACT SIGNING

Jim Beam, the all-American Bourbon Whisky, and Wave 89.1 entered into an agreement making Wave 89.1 the official radio station of the 'Powerpool Nights' billiards competition. The event brings the fun and excitement of playing billiards to five of the most popular billiard halls in town, namely Gutson-Ortigas, Cactus Bar-Libis, Famous Mike's-Libis, Loft-Katipunan, and Bargo-Eastwood City. The grand finals will be held on Feb. 15 at Cactus Bar. 'Powerpool Nights' is open to both male and female billiard enthusiasts 18 years old and above. Seated (from left) are Frances Badelles-Bumanlag, event manager; Joseph Cruel, brand manager of Maxxium Philippines, and James Bonnevie, account executive of Wave 89.1

Grand fiesta sale on

OVER 1,000 retail establishments are now on sale with attractive discounts as big as 70 percent off in various malls/shopping centers nationwide for the WOW Philippines Grand Fiesta Sale which will last until Jan. 31.

A joint project of the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA), Department of Tourism (DOT) and Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp. (PCVC), WOW Philippines Grand Fiesta Sale is expected to attract both foreign and local tourists in the country.

Touted as the opening salvo for Visit Island Philippines 2003, it aims to promote the country as the shopping paradise in Asia.

Among the major malls/shopping centers joining this event include Ayala Center, Alabang Town Center, Araneta Center, Ali Mall, Farmer's Plaza, Ever Gotesco Malls, Festival Supermall, Greenbelt Shopping Plaza, Harrison Plaza, Robinsons Malls, Rustan's Commercial Center, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, SM Supermalls, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Star Mall, and Tutuban Malls.

Additional participating retail establishments are Odyssey, Penshoppe, Oxygen, The Body Shop, Calvin Klein, Tokyo Fashion, Weinstein Piano, CEO, Francesco, Dickies USA, EP Lacarcel, All Eyes Optical, Arrow, Crabtree & Evelyn, Levi's Dockers Shop, Otto Shoes, Urban, Esprit, Kickers, Jol Boutique, Photoplus, Fotofinish, Kodak Express, Jag, SOS, Hangten, Art Cakes, ABS-CBN Studio Store, Bossini, Characters Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, Kashieca, A&B Textile, Home Options, Australian Shoes, Peñas Wedding Collection, Le Phil Collection, Citibeds, Footmate, Nunn Bush, Scentsations, Paotsin Specialities, Evolution, True Value Hardware, Funtasia, Officing, Plains & Prints, Dermexcel, Unica Hija & Madras, LA Gear, Aficionado Germane Eau de Toilette, Pale Bleue, K Servico, Pieces, Joye Mark, Kuryente, J18, Photoline, The Blanc Shop, Mossimo, Act II, Bells Lighting, Bass, among others. For more details, call PCVC at 525-1255; 525-9318, or PRA at 687-4985/4181/4180.

e-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.

PEOPLE at WORK

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ REGINA GALANG REYES, Subsection Editor

What is the secret to excellent customer service?

WORKING WOUNDED

By Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: We just did a customer survey and learned that they think our service is awful. We have clear service guidelines. What are we doing wrong?

The Customer Is Always Right, Darn It

My dad was a car dealer and once we got past everyone's bad jokes ("Gee, does he try to sell you your dinner?") the perks were pretty terrific. For instance, each kid got a car when we got our license. Well, one day something overtook me and I actually offered to mow the lawn for my dad with his ride-on mower. "No thanks," he muttered. "You're liable to run it over the curb and destroy the blade." Now, I was just a kid at the time but even I could see the illogic. He was willing to trust me with a $6,000 Camaro but not with his $200 mower!

Something similar often happens when it comes to customer service. There are managers who trust their employees to make thousand dollar sales—but then don't trust them to make the little day-to-day decisions that influence how customers feel about the business. The result is disenfranchised sales people who can't deliver the kind of service customers want.

Great service means empowering employees to serve as much as it means having sound customer service policies. For tips I turned to Robert Spector, author, with Patrick McCarthy, of the "The Nordstrom Way" (Wiley, 1998), a look inside one of America's top service providers. I've adapted the following from it:

- Does everyone in your organization know what it means to sell? Every employee at Nordstrom starts on the sales floor. I know this because I once bought a pair of shoes from a salesman named Nordstrom. How many companies do you know where the founder's grandson starts his career on bended knee?
- Do you make it easy for your salespeople to make a sale? Have you ever gone shopping and had a salesperson tell you, "I can't help you, that's another department"? Well, not at Nordstrom. They make it easy for employees to sell (and easy for customers to spend) by allowing salespeople full range of the store.
- Do your salespeople know that service is as much a priority as sales? Do you evaluate employees' service record, or just their quarterly sales? If you only pay lip service to service, so will they.
- Are your employees so busy following your customer service policies that they don't have room to truly serve? At Nordstrom there's only one rule: "Use good judgment in all situations." Employees know that the customer is always right and that service is the top priority, and they are empowered to act with that understanding. Nordstrom is famous for once accepting a returned tire when they don't even sell tires! Yeah, they lost a little money on the tire but they got a lot of mileage from the interaction.

That's what I call putting the rubber to the road in satisfying customers!

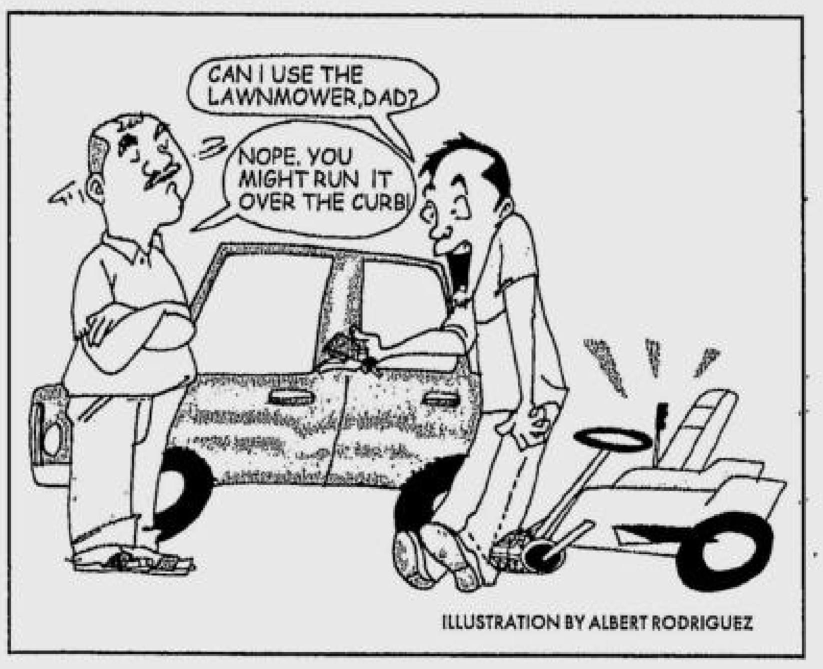
CAN I USE THE LAWNMOWER, DAD?
NOPE. YOU MIGHT RUN IT OVER THE CURB!

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Here are the results of the recent workingwounded.com poll: What song do you sing when confronted with a difficult customer?

—"I'll close my eyes," 12.1 percent

—"I'll never say no," 22.9 percent

—"I'll be there," 64.8 percent

Our winning customer service strategy comes from Sue L. in Puyallup, WA. "A lot of companies pride themselves in their 'money back guarantees'. Money back allow you to walk away, still angry, still unsatisfied, and now in search of somewhere else to spend your money. I suggest a 'Satisfaction guaranteed' policy. When a mistake is made, admit it, apologize for it and fix it."

(Send feedback to bob@workingwounded.com*)*

Crabby customers bring companies great returns

BY REGINA GALANG REYES

MAKE a crabby customer smile and cash registers sing. This is the secret of companies known for their excellent customer service—and outstanding sales records. Serving customers well, especially the difficult ones, is proof of a company's dedication to customer service that in turn gains for them loyal customers.

I know how hard it is to serve crabby customers—because I am one. But as soon as I am "turned," my brand loyalty and my hard-earned pesos are won. After adopting the writers' lifestyle which allows for a lot of strolling through malls (they say creativity starts in a mall—a standard excuse of creative people out on a lark!), I've become a crabby customer through long exposure to various types of mall-type establishments. .

I've learned which stores have salespersons and which stores have, as I call them, "no-salespersons." To define, salespersons are people who try to sell you something; "no-salespersons" are persons who are supposed to be salespersons but are really not interested in making a sale." You will recognize the latter when they stare blankly, say "We are out of stock for that item," and refuse to move from their inertia or when they simply refuse to make eye contact with you and pretend to be busy with something or someone else. Usually, these stores with "no-salespersons" really don't have many customers.

Comparing customer service practices in various countries with the practices here in the Philippines, it appears that customer service doesn't seem to be a strong point of Filipinos working in the Philippines. This may be an exaggeration but Filipinos seem to be the worst when it comes to customer service. The other way around may also be true: Filipinos may also be the worst customers. Assuming these statements to be true, why are these so? Perhaps it's a knee-jerk reaction to colonial mentality. Unwilling to be "oppressed" further, after 300 years of colonial rule, Filipinos refuse to "serve" and prefer "to be served" instead.

Many salespersons may just be in their jobs because these are the only ones they can get and may, consciously or unconsciously, think their work to be "demeaning." On the other hand, being waited upon is considered a status symbol hereabouts. Observe how some Filipinos treat fast food crew like domestic helpers.

But what a great misperception! Customer service is the greatest honor of all because it is the front-line interaction with people who give the company, employees and consequently, the salesperson, the revenues that bring dignity of life to everyone. Salespeople who have this attitude serve with dignity and joy; customers who have this view treat salespeople with dignity and respect.

To make customer service work, salespeople and customers alike need to know the etiquette of "serving" and "being served."

Here are some tips for serving the customer excellently:

1. Look into the customer's eyes when he asks for a product or service. In other words, pay attention to the customer. How many times have you observed waiters milling about in the restaurant but seemingly not noticing the customer frantically waving his arm? Or the pharmacy assistant at the drugstore who looks down while customers crowd the counter? Aside from paying attention, attend to the customer. Is it not irritating to see a cashier chattering to a bagger at the supermarket checkout counter as if that were her main work and punching in your items just a sideline?

2. Don't ask the customer for change when you have change in your cash box. Coins are extremely hard to get and it will take your customer some time before she fishes them out of a huge bag. Meanwhile, other customers are impatiently waiting in line. And place the change, especially coins, in the customer's hands. If you place the coins on the counter for your customer to get, a lot of time is wasted as he takes them one by one.

3. Strive to offer the customer an alternative product or service if the one he is asking for is not available. When the size of the shoes he wants is not available, ask him if he would like to try some other style. Don't just say, "We don't have it." A customer wants to buy. Make it easy for him to do so. Otherwise, you won't get a sale.

4. When the customer complains, take his complaint at face value and not think he is out to pull a fast one on you. There is, almost always, a valid reason for his complaint. Why should he make a fuss in the first place and put himself out of sorts for no reason?

5. Don't make the customer feel she is a disturbance to your work. She IS your work! When a customer asks for something and you happen to be busy with another customer, just acknowledge her presence cheerfully and say, "I'll be with you shortly" rather than say, "Wait a minute. I still have some things to do."

On the other hand, here are some tips for treating salespersons with respect:

1. When they greet you, smile and greet back. It's not a shame to look them in the eye and show that you recognize them as persons and not doorkeepers.

2. When you are satisfied with their service, thank them. It will make their day. This is what is called psychic income. At least, even if they don't get executive salaries, they will get executive-type psychic income.

3. When you call their attention, do so with a smile. If they are busy with another customer, wait for your turn, then make your request.

4. If you have a complaint, explain the reason for your dissatisfaction calmly and point out clearly what you expect. When they address your complaint, show your appreciation.

5. If the salesperson does not treat you with respect, you have the freedom to leave the establishment and not buy their products or services. But do so quietly. Their declining sales figures will clearly show that they have not served their customers well.

Quality customer service gives companies the competitive edge they need to survive in this highly demanding market. On the other hand, being an excellent customer will give you more access to highly valuable products and services. With these practices, we can give customer service in the Philippines an excellent name.

Readers define leadership

RECIPES for LEARNING

By Moje Ramos-Aquino

I AM sharing with you the opinions of three of our readers on the questions: How do you describe the political, business, spiritual, social and academic environment and culture we are in today? How do you describe the leader who could lead us in this chaotic order? Can you name a few leaders, dead or alive, you admire and whose example you want to emulate? What are her/his sterling competencies?

From Vincent Robosa: "I won't answer the first question because I think the situation of the society we are living in is quite obvious.

"A leader who can lead us in this chaotic world is someone who has values in life. A leader is someone who is idealistic but is still in touch with reality. I know you might argue with me on that characteristic but I believe it is true. All great leaders and all those who made a difference in this world are idealistic. Oftentimes, they are ridiculed for their ideas and insights."

From Ranie of Cebu: "True leaders are strong-willed because they are confident that God is with them. Unluckily, I cannot see the aura of spituality of our present leaders. They seem to be focused on the 'what is to be done' and do them by their own ways and means. Are they deeply rooted in the belief that God will do the rest?

"Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi and our Lord Jesus Christ are true great paragons of such leadership. Fr. Theo Goossens, CICM (may he rest in peace), my seminary formator in college, has God with him to do many tasks. They are for me leaders who can lead us rightly in a world of chaos."

From pa3ck: "Q#1—Our government, since we had our independence in 1946, is run like hell. Our supposed leaders take too literally what President Quezon so famously said. The number one issue in every election is graft and corruption. Our supposed leaders just want to make themselves rich and powerful while they ingratiate themselves to the poor with crumbs and false promises. There are those with initial good intentions, but are quickly blinded with the glitter of gold and power. The lure of multi-billion peso bank accounts, fleet of luxury cars, mansions and self-glorification become irresistible. It is amazing how those with bleeding hearts to uplift the Filipino remain inutile with a lot of talk but no action. *Acta non verba.* I remember when the Philippines was number one in Asia right after the war only to become the basket case in the region today. All because of greed by our so-called leaders. Their perennial campaign slogan is—*alis diyan, kami naman mangungurakot.*

"Q#2—Type of leader—Someone with 'balls.' The likes of Mr. Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore.

"Q#3—Ferdinand E. Marcos but only the first two years of his martial law… There was discipline and fear to go against the law. Drug dealers, rapists, murderers and smugglers were curbed or shot. These I want to see today. The would-be pseudo patriots should meanwhile take a backseat. And if there be a benevolent dictator at this time, let us not let him steal, otherwise he deserves a shot between the eyes."

From Carmelyn Ay-yokad: "For me, I admire the leadership of Bro. Eraño G. Manalo of the Iglesia Ni Cristo religious organization. For many years now, they remain intact, calm, faithful and smoothly operating. He can control the whole organization here in the Philippines and even abroad."

Blackout blues

Monday's blackout gave rise to monstrous traffic all over Manila and presented a leadership challenge to motorists and pedestrians. In the busy intersections where I live (intersections of V. Mapa-Ramon Magsaysay Boulevard; Araneta Avenue-Aurora Boulevard and V. Mapa-Old Sta. Mesa) guess who emerged as leaders? Guess who manned the intersections to untangle the messy grid of vehicles of all sizes and make and big mass of pedestrians? Guess who stood their ground to put haughty and ill-mannered motorists in their proper place? Guess who sacrificed a few hours of earnings to help put order in the intersections and to appease flying tempers? The cigarette vendors! Kudos to the cigarette vendors and other "ordinary" people not only here in my community but also everywhere who all helped restore sanity in our streets last Monday. Guess where our formal traffic leaders from MMDA and police officers were? I don't know but they came one hour after when traffic was already moving with ease.

I particularly admired this cigarette vendor at the corner of Araneta Avenue and Aurora Boulevard. He clung to his lifeline, his cigarette box, with his left arm and used his right hand waving his "Good Morning" towel to do his traffic signals. All the time, he was moving, dancing, pirouetting, and avoiding being run-over by maniacal attempts of some hardheaded motorists who wanted to get ahead, thinking only of themselves. These drivers will never become good leaders because they do not know how to be good followers.

(Send feedback to Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com*)*

Early retirement turns exec into stay-at-home husband

BY TITA DATU PUANGCO

Advice

FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I WAS offered early retirement over a year ago when the bank where I was employed acquired another bank. Today, I stay at home. I have taken over a lot of the chores in managing our household. My wife continues to enjoy working and in fact, recently got a promotion. Actually, I enjoy doing repairs, spending time with my children and attending parent-teacher conferences. My concern is I miss being the breadwinner and the feeling of security I once enjoyed as a junior executive. This is keeping me awake at night. I also feel embarrassed every time my wife complains of having a long day at work.

Stay-At-Home Husband

Reading your letter, I recall the words of Joel Barker about paradigms. What you need is to shift your mindset, to go beyond your current paradigms on the roles of man and woman. Traditionally, the man goes out to work as breadwinner, while the woman stays at home. But the reality is, many men today stay at home while the woman works. The other reality is, both the man and the woman work, while helpers manage the home.

A friend of mine active in a family movement shared with me his experience. As a couple, he and his wife shared a problem that is similar to yours in an international meeting. A couple from Europe said," Is that still an issue? We accepted this fact years ago in Europe and in the United States." He realized that this is a recent phenomenon in Asia.

The root of the problem may be the male ego. A fascinating article in "The Economist" magazine describes "how the heavy muscular jobs from which men derived assertive, productive masculinity have disappeared." Manual workers have given way to knowledge workers that require "nimble minds and nimble fingers" that are more akin to women. We have seen for instance the proliferation of call centers, the new sunrise industry in the Philippines that employs more women.

More choices

Another view is that women have more choices than men, while men have no choice but to work outside the home. Women have won social acceptance for their right to either stay at home and not work or work first, then attend to having a family later. They can also choose to work and, at the same time, care for the family. Or have the family first, then work later. But these choices are open to men as well. What is important is that the unity and love between the husband and the wife remain strong and constant. Communication play a big part in ensuring acceptance as a couple of the new paradigm.

Think of this: before the industrial age where workers were herded in factories and offices, people worked at home or close to home. They were craftsmen like carpenters and shoemakers or farmers tilling the fields. Today, we see a return of this phenomenon with knowledge and virtual workers. In my case, I work at my home office an average of two days a week. I send my work to our Makati office through the Internet. In fact, my more productive moments are at home. Working at home has enabled me to spend more time with my youngest daughter when she comes back from school.

Things to do

So, what can you do? First of all, check your nostalgia for your job in the bank. It is a thing of the past. The view of job security is fast disappearing with globalization, changing demographics, competition and technology. What is important is to look forward. Because of his free will, only man is capable to choose not be stuck in the past and look to the future. Stop being on neutral and go for new beginnings.

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Second, stop feeling guilty working at home. Governments do not capture the work done at home as having economic value. But what is of greater value than ensuring that your children, who will be the citizens and parents of the future, grow in a loving, caring way because of your presence? Enjoy staying at home while it lasts. My belief is a talented person will soon be discovered by good companies and before long, he will become busy again.

Third, recognize that you have choices. You can either work from the home or look for a job outside the home. You can also choose to go back to school and pursue that elusive graduate degree that you never had time to complete. Another choice is to work part time. One opportunity for experienced early retirees is to teach. Students need more practical applications on top of the theories. Many schools today have the challenge of recruiting qualified and experienced people. Since you have a nest egg in your retirement benefit, it may be easy for you to be content with a cut in pay. What is important is to be mentally and physically active.

Job creation

Then again, you can create your own job. Be an entrepreneur. If you enjoy home maintenance and you have good networking and organizing skills, why not set up a home maintenance venture? There is always work in homes for a plumber or carpenter or house painter or electrician. If you are good with a camera or the computer, clients will find you with some promotional advertising in the village or parish bulletin. If you bake good cakes or delicious food, go into catering. There are endless opportunities when one starts to think job creation rather than looking for a traditional job.

If there is no urgency to find work, then look around for opportunities in the parish, village association, non-governmental organizations for volunteer work that you can do along your skills and competencies.

Finally, on the tendency of your wife to complain of a long day, it may simply be her way of letting go of steam and managing her stress. Give her a good rub on the neck, back or foot and the tiredness will be quick to go. Spend quality time together so that your relationship continues to grow even in the shift in roles. Take care and God bless you.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION, INC.

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Editor SPROJECTS@INQUIRER.COM.PH **LITA PASCUAL**, Account Manager

MESSAGES

WARMEST felicitations to the Philippine Marketing Association Inc. on its 48th anniversary commemoration and induction ceremonies.

I commend the Philippine Marketing Association for its meritorious achievements and unwavering commitment to nation building. Your creative and innovative efforts to promote Philippine products and services are vital in our drive to boost our country's economic growth. As marketing professionals, you contend with today's complex environment and create surefire strategies to win in the competitive business climate. I urge you to persevere in the efforts to develop strategies and approaches to help businesses and our people with the opportunities in the global era.

The Philippine economy offers solid opportunities for greater business growth and development. We are committed to pursuing our goal of greater international development by continuing to foster an environment conducive to investments. As we proceed in this growth path in today's competitive global environment, we intend to make our business climate more attractive to potential investors. Our imperatives include an environment of transparency, level playing field and renewed investor confidence. With the vital contributions of marketing professionals, our aims for greater growth and development are easier achieved.

I wish the success of the Philippine Marketing Association as the nation moves forward to a bright and prosperous future. My administration joins hands with the private sector in establishing the physical foundations for sustainable development and ensuring the aspirations of the Filipino people for greater peace, progress and prosperity.

Mabuhay!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

IT IS BOTH a great privilege and a tremendous responsibility to have been elected President of the Philippine Marketing Association. I thank the membership for placing their trust in me, and pledge my full commitment to helping the Association attain its vision of serving the Filipino marketing profession and the people of this great nation.

The year 2002 promises to be one of tremendous challenges, but also of great opportunities. We must rise up and meet the challenges, while moving aggressively to take advantage of the opportunities. We must ACT -- NOT REACT. By doing so we will build on the PMA's solid foundation created by previous leaders and members over the last 48 years. And by doing so we help ensure the Association's sustainability and ongoing success as our 50th anniversary approaches.

Tonight we are gathered for the formal induction of our Year 2002 Officers and Board. I congratulate these quality professionals for their commitment and willingness to serve the community of marketers in the Philippines. We look forward to working together to propel the PMA to unprecedented accomplishment and service to the Filipino people.

MA. VICTORIA E. AÑONUEVO
President
Philippine Marketing Association

IT IS WITH great pleasure that I welcome everyone to the induction Ceremonies of the Philippine Marketing Association.

This significant event marks the beginning of another year of marketing excellence and exemplary leadership. Our new officers and Board of Directors are comprise of distinguished marketing men and women who are seasoned practitioners, I trust that their expertise and experiences will lead the association to greater achievements.

The tasks and responsibilities delegated to PMA's officers doubly challenging and demanding with the prevailing global economic crisis. I request everyone to support our leaders in their undertakings. Though we may encounter obstacles on our journey to progress, solidarity will help sustain us.

Early on, officers and Board of Directors are already lining up projects and events for the PMA. I am confident that your PMA Board and Directors will make these events bigger and more exciting. I encourage our members to participate in these valuable activities, which will help marketing practitioners further enchance their know-how skills.

Year 2002 is indeed a promising year for all of us. Let us all work together to keep the marketing industry resilient and thriving.

Congratulations to our newly inducted officers and Board of Directors!

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

JOSE JESUS F. ROCES
2001 President

2002 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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MA. VICTORIA E. AÑONUEVO

EVP/Director, NMC
CERGEN D. GO

VP-Finance/Treasurer
LILIBETH I. SAMONTE

VP-Meetings & Attendance
MA. ELENA S. GUNDA

VP-Membership
RUBY T. RAMORES

VP-Education/Director, Agora Conference
DR. FELIX M. LAO, JR.

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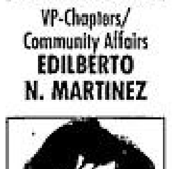
SONIA E. DE GUZMAN



National Marketing Week
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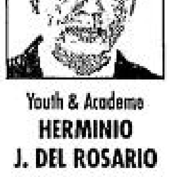
Agora Awards
MA. VERONICA F. HIZON

Youth & Academe
HERMINIO J. DEL ROSARIO

Fellowship & Sports/ Gov't. Affairs
MA. ESPERANZA C. CADUNGOG

PR & Corporate Communications
JOSE MARIA T. POLICARPIO



Immediate Past President/Director-Int'l. Affairs
JOSE JESUS F. ROCES

Dynamic group of Pinoy marketing professionals has new officers

THE PHILIPPINE Marketing Association, Inc. (PMA) announces the change in its roster of officers and board of directors for the current year with Ma. Victoria Añonuevo as the new president replacing Jose Jesus Roces.

Official induction of the new set of officers will be held at Hotel Intercontinental Grand Ballroom today. The theme for the event is "Act, Don't Retreat! Marketing: The Final Answer." Guest speaker and inducting officer is Ayala Land Inc. chair Fernando Zobel de Ayala.

The 2002 PMA officers are Cergen Go, EVP/director National Marketing Conference, Lilibeth Samonte, VP finance/treasurer, Ma. Elena Gunda, VP-meetings and attendance, Ruby Ramores, VP-membership, Dr. Felix Lao, Jr., VP-education/director Agora conference, Edilberto Martinez, VP-chapters/community affairs, Elvira Topacio, board secretary, and Sonia de Guzman, internal auditor.

The new board of directors are Elizabeth Flores (National Marketing Week), Ma. Veronica Hizon (Agora Awards), Herminio del Rosario (Youth and Academe), Ma. Esperanza Cayabyab (Fellowship and Sports/Government Affairs), Jose Maria Policarpio (PR and Corporate Communications), and Jose Jesus Roces (Immediate Past President/Director International Affairs).

Añonuevo is currently VP for marketing and sales group of Ayala Land, Inc. Before getting her current post in the PMAI, she served the association in various capacities—chairing several committees (membership committee, search committee Agora Awards 2001, search committee head for TOMAS and TOSMA, marketing management category Agora Awards 2001, and VP for Education 2001).

She says her mission for the PMA is to "nurture PMA's most important resource"—the members, through a continuous education program, symposia and conferences.

Aside from "ensuring" that PMA remains the premiere association of the Philippine marketing professionals, she also plans to have PMA actively participate in the Asia Pacific Marketing Federation and the World Marketing Federation.

"We wish to highlight the great capabilities and potentials of the Philippine marketing professionals in the global arena. My vision is to reinvigorate PMA as a dynamic and sustainable association servicing the marketing professional and the Filipino people."

The Philippine Marketing Association was organized and registered as a non-stock, non-profit corporation on January 17, 1954 with the general objective of developing marketing as a science and a profession.

Since then, in its 48 years of existence, PMA has established and embarked on projects beneficial to marketing professionals and the business landscape in general. PMA's thrust is geared mostly in continuous education of marketing professionals, establishment of chapters nationwide, marketing conferences here and abroad and the Agora Awards.

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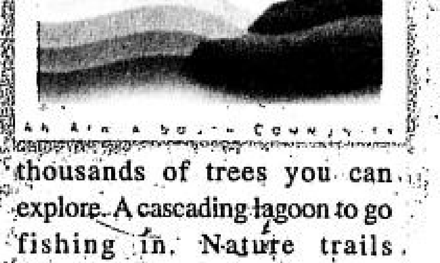

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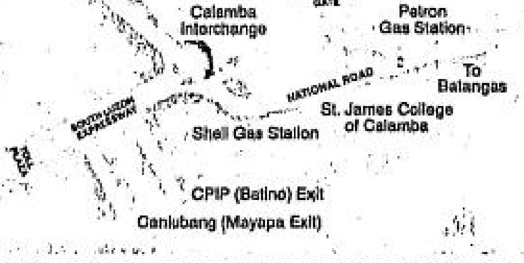

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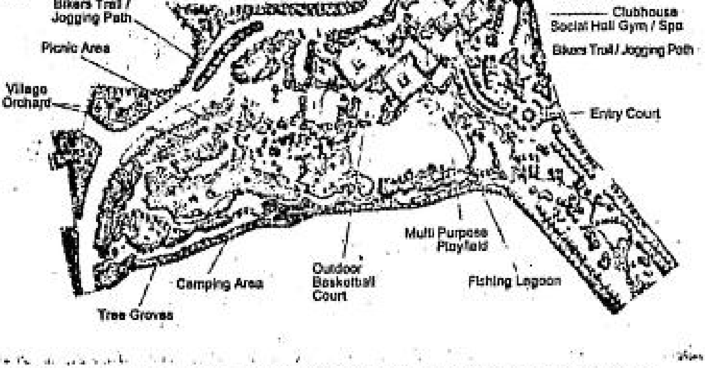

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LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor ■ PAM PASTOR, Chief of Correspondents

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2bU!

This girl's got a Heart

PHOTOS: MIKE ALQUINTO

BY JULES ALCANTARA

> She is not just your ordinary Star Circle member. In the first place, she puts her heart where her mouth is

HEART Evangelista is fast becoming the "it" girl of the moment in the glittery world of show business. At 16, she has managed to steal the thunder from her batch mates in ABS-CBN's Star Circle and stick out like a sore, if but very beautiful thumb.

Discovered at the mall when she was 14, this young looker started out in a Rexona ad with Cogie Domingo. After a couple of other commercials, she told her dad that she wanted to take up acting workshop in ABS-CBN. Spotted by Talent Center head honcho Beverly Vergel, she was invited to audition for Star Circle. "I had to convince my dad to allow me to audition because he said *tama na 'yung* commercials. Finally, he allowed me but he said if I don't pass, that's it *na*," she recalls. Needless to say, she passed the auditions with flying colors especially since she was not just a mere wannabe but someone brimming with real, honest-to-goodness potential. After a year of rigorous training in acting, singing and dancing, she was launched together with the likes of former child actor Janus del Prado and heartthrob Rafael Rosell. Currently, she stars in "D Pilya and D Pilot," "Gmik" and "Magandang Tanghali Bayan."

Recently, 2bU! chatted with Heart. Contrary to initial expectations that she would be all flighty young thing whose only concerns are being popular and pretty, Heart turned out to be really smart, talented and determined. Armed with preternatural poise, wit and maturity well beyond her years, she even managed to disarm us with a face that is guaranteed to catch the fancy of even the most jaded of eyes.

I mean, ask our photographer. He took forever to finish the pictorial!

How does it feel to have five sisters?

It's really great to have five sisters. *Kasi* like for me, I see them go through a lot of things like growing up, having boyfriends and so I don't really have to rush into going through those experiences. *Parang* I can just watch and observe them and see what happens in the end. *Kaya* for me it's really good to have a lot of sisters since I don't really have to necessarily go through what they have gone through *kasi* I saw *na* the consequences.

What's your earliest memory of performing for a crowd or your family?

Siguro the first would be playing the piano when I was around 6 years old. I don't know how to read notes—I play by ear. I do it by *ouido*. This guy who plays the guitar for Barrio Fiesta taught me how to play the song "Somewhere in Time."

How do you manage your time between school and show biz commitments?

It's hard! Like for school, I go to Distance Learning, so instead of regular everyday class, we get modules. But for me, it's still advisable to go to regular school as much as possible. I can handle it but I'm sure for others, it's harder. You know, sometimes I feel like I'm getting *bobo na* and even if I am not, I still feel like there's something missing. I'm missing the "school" experience. But talking about experience, I'd rather stay in show business. In school, you get stuck with the same crowd. But in show biz, you get to meet lots of different kinds of people. You get to go to different places. But if we are going to talk about studies, I'd rather stay in school.

With your tight schedule, how do you find time to do your school work?

I bring my work to my tapings. But it' still hard *kasi* in a way, I'm kind of artistic, so I'm very moody and so I go with my mood swings. Like for example, I don't have any scheduled work for the day and I'm just home, that gives me a chance to do my modules. But sometimes it's hard to concentrate because I keep thinking about what I need to do the next day! There are so many things on my mind.

THIS GIRL'S/ p.C6

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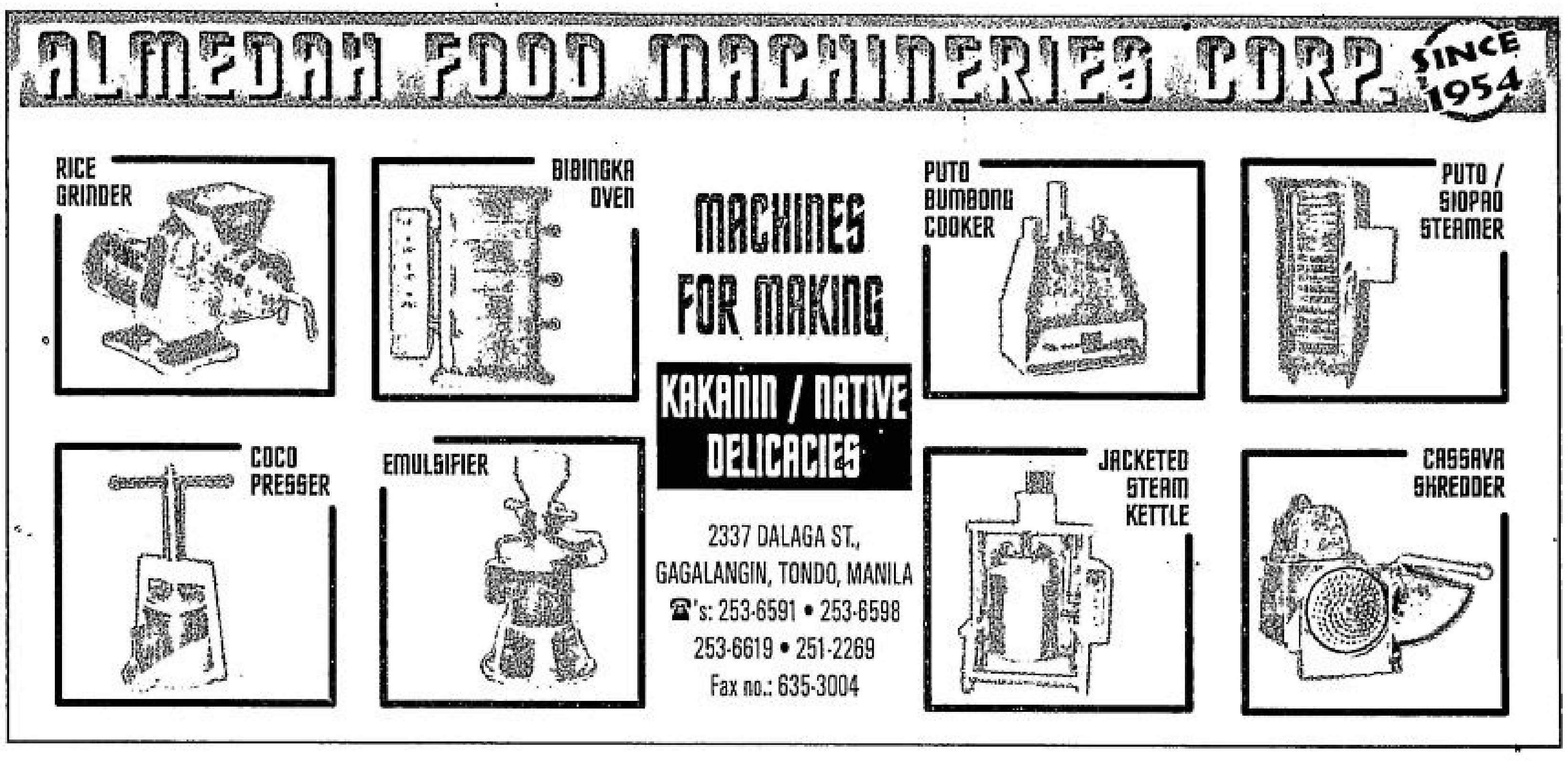
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People she doesn't know are talking against her

CHATROOM

September Mahino & Carlos Garchitorena

DEAR Sep and Caloy,

I'm 19 years old and a college student. I think I'm a nice girl, but I always hear people saying nasty things about me behind my back. Like I'm *masungit* or I don't look like a nice person. They even say I'm weird. I try to ignore these comments but I'm only human. They hurt me. I don't know how to deal with people who stab me in the back or ruin my reputation. Do I confront them or what? Are they only doing that for fun? I don't hang out with those people, I don't even know them personally, so I'm confused why they do that to me. Can you tell me anything helpful?

KC

At worst, life sucks; at best, it's bittersweet. That's just the way it is. You can't please everybody, and you can't even please a single person 100 percent of the time.

When you were a baby, you turned your parents into the mythical Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, transformed them into the nocturnal Nosferatu and unglamorous walking zombies for two years. But your parents loved you and though they might show that love in different ways, they wouldn't stab you in the back unless they were psychotic.

> Flaunt your assets and powers in their long faces until they turn blue

Which leads me to the next subgroup of people—your friends and contemporaries who, apart from their post-pubescent peculiarities and troubled-teen tantrums, can be a most uncontrollably psychotic lot. Neighbors, politicians and upperclassmen—why are the guns of character assassination on automatic, even when you're not behind enemy lines or in the crossfire? One of the bricks that make up the turret wall of the insecure is the neutralization of perceived threats, even if actually nonexistent, to their idyllic security.

Although the effects on their character when (and, hugely, if) they mature can be adverse, I say flaunt your assets and powers in their long faces until they turn blue. Do this without exhausting your ability to divert and focus those same powers and assets to positive and self-enriching endeavors. And since the court of public opinion can be the swiftest and the most brutal, never lose the moral high ground, ergo, don't fight fire with fire.

The Book of Blarmey explicitly says: "There is no cure for insecurity except the realization and acceptance that you are, in a galactic way, dust." Arguably, we may be limited in our means to repair disabilities—physical, mental, emotional and so on. A man who lacks a limb may seek a prosthetic but to succeed, he does not bemoan his loss of a step or grip on things. Instead, he calls upon the other elements of his being to be a better man.

CALOY

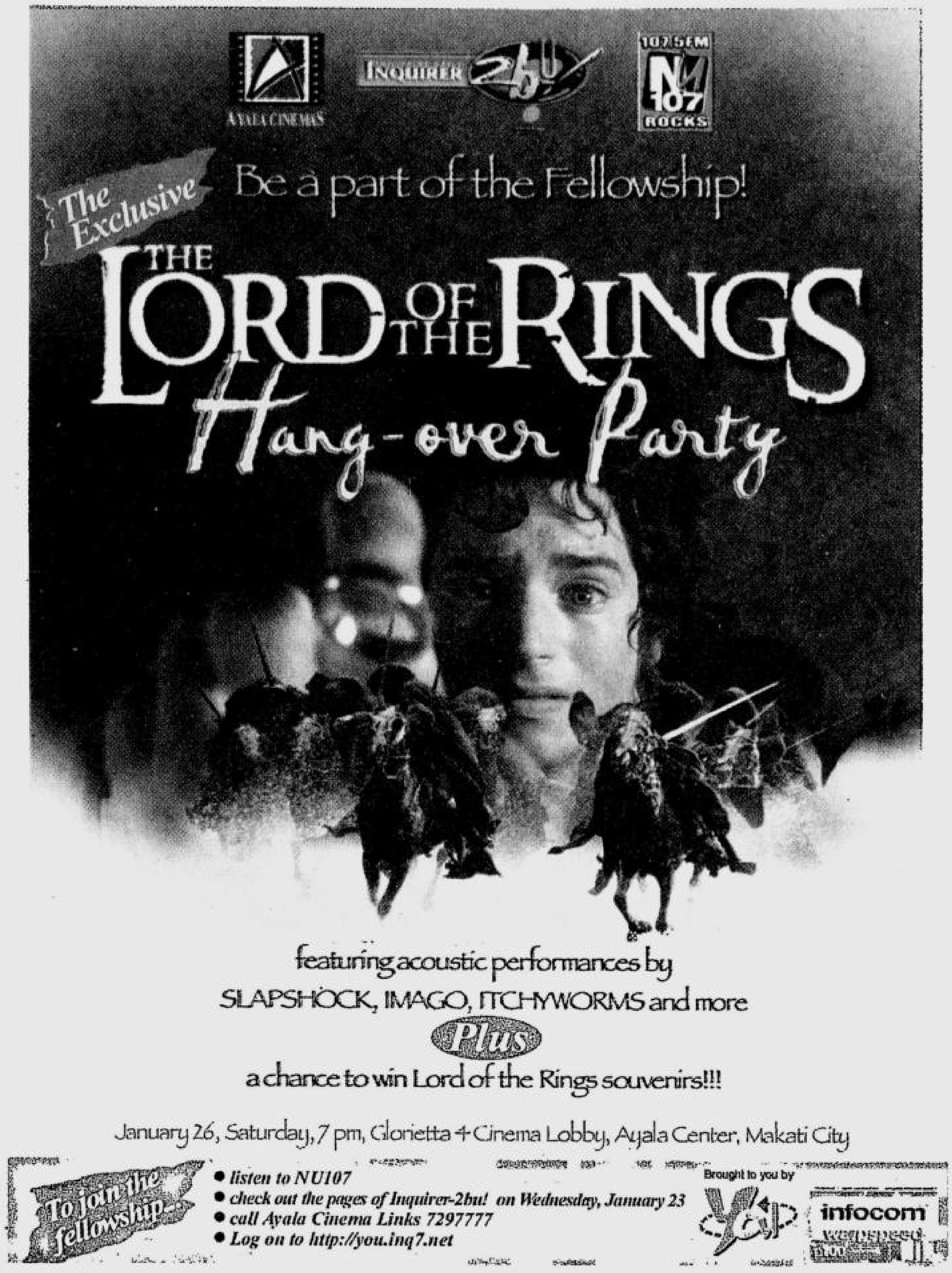
I think every school has had its share of bullies and back-stabbers and people who get picked on. One way or the other, every student has experienced playing all those three roles. I am saying this only as a consolation. You're not always going to be picked on between now and forever. But this does not mean you should turn around and demand payback or start bullying other people.

I think the best way to deal with people who like to spend their time finding fault with other people is simply to ignore them. Easier said than done, yes, but if everyone listened and took to heart every little criticism that they get, we'd all be stuck in a rut and not know what to do. You can't avoid hearing nasty comments from mean people—even those you don't personally know.

But you can learn to brush those comments aside. Choose people whose words you know you can trust (you don't have to look too far to find them). You may reach a point where you think you just cannot let a particular comment pass but I still suggest you think twice before confronting anybody. Baring your feelings to these mean people will only give them more opportunity to pick on you. Your fight (of sorts) will become official. And that is the last thing you want to happen.

Quoting Shirley Manson, march to the beat of your own drum. You can't always please everybody so you might as well try to please yourself first.

SEP



AYALA CINEMAS INQUIRER 2bU! 107.5FM NU 107 ROCKS

The Exclusive

Be a part of the Fellowship!

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Hang-over Party

featuring acoustic performances by
SLAPSHÖCK, IMAGO, ITCHYWORMS and more
Plus
a chance to win Lord of the Rings souvenirs!!!

January 26, Saturday, 7 pm, Glorietta 4 Cinema Lobby, Ayala Center, Makati City

To join the fellowship
- listen to NU107
- check out the pages of Inquirer-2bu! on Wednesday, January 23
- call Ayala Cinema Links 7297777
- Log on to http://you.inq7.net

Brought to you by
infocom

Be your own lord of the ring

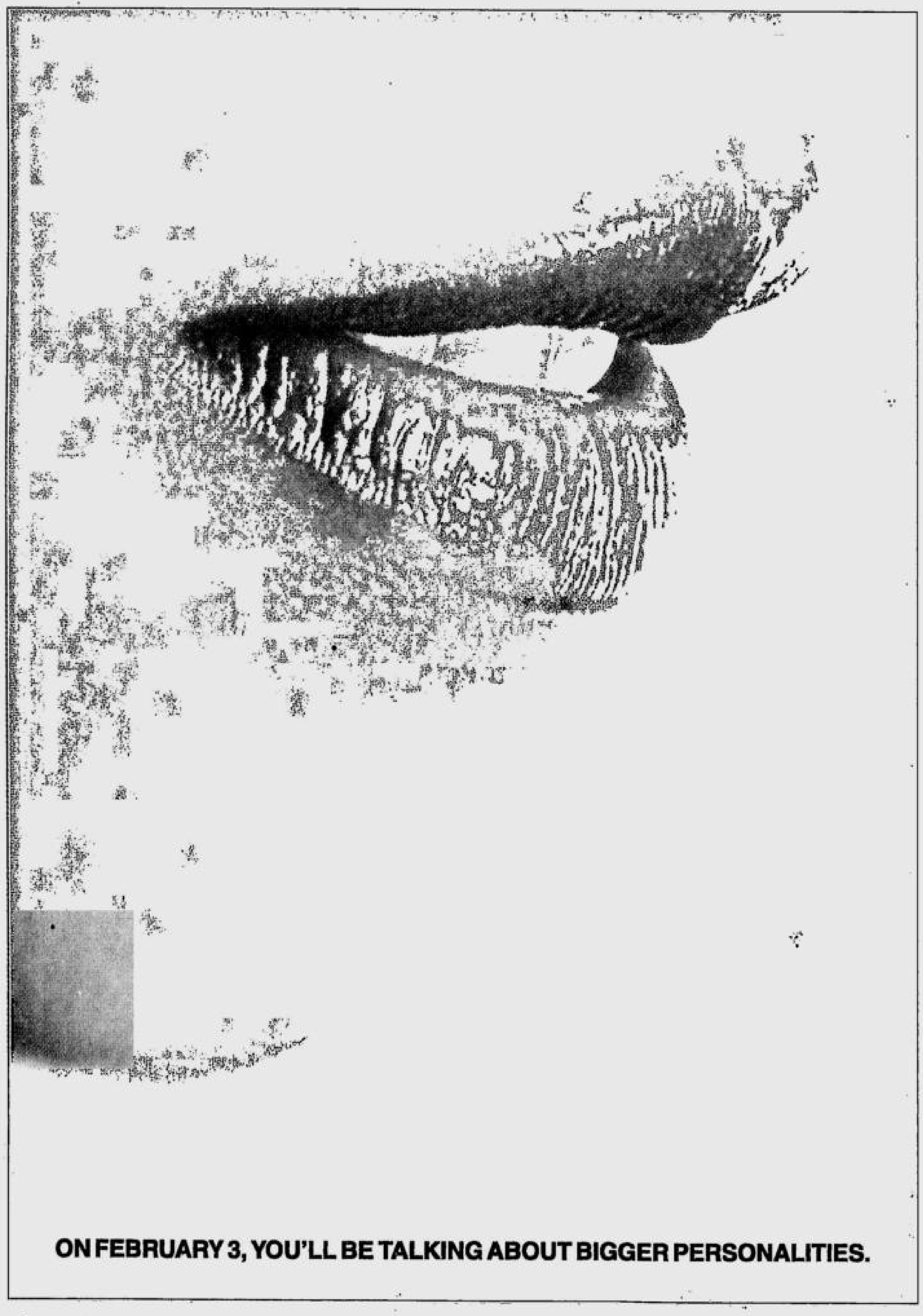
2bU! and NU 107 host the 'Lord of the Rings' hangover party

TWO more days and counting—that is how much time you have left to catch the first "Lord of the Rings (LOR)" installment, "The Fellowship of the Ring." To keep up with the "Ring" spirit, 2bU! and NU 107 will hold "LOR: The Hangover Party" on Jan. 26 at the Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby. The event features free grub, goodies to win and a semi-acoustic performance featuring Imago, The Itchyworms!, <S>andwich and Slapshock! If you want to be part of this shindig, read on:

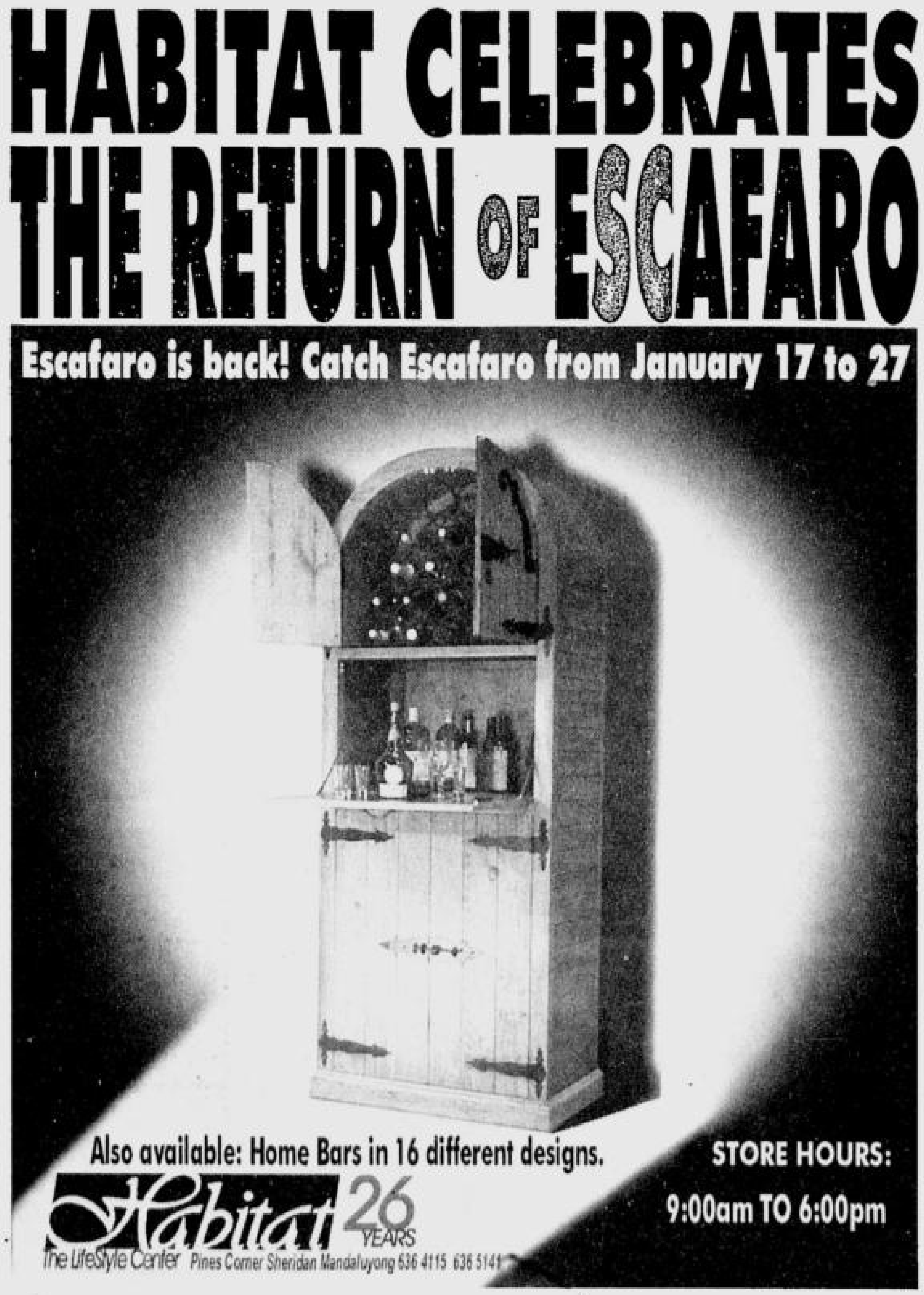
- Three rings have been hidden—one in Ayala, one in NU and one in 2bU! Glorietta moviegoers who chanced upon the ring in the right cinema were given stubs. NU 107 has its ring on-air (tune in to NU 107.5 for more details). 2bU! has one hidden in this issue.
- Find the *right* ring in today's 2bU!, snip it out and present yourself *and* the ring at the cinema lobby on Jan. 26 at 7:30 p.m. This entitles you to free food and entry to the raffle, where we're giving away tons of "LOR" goodies!
- If you're one lucky duck who happens to have all three rings (one from Ayala, one from NU, one from 2bU!), bring all three—you're entitled to an exclusive raffle.

Put on that Sherlock Holmes gear and weed through this week's issue to find the ring!

It's a first-come, first-served basis. Hey, whoever said being an early bird was uncool?



ON FEBRUARY 3, YOU'LL BE TALKING ABOUT BIGGER PERSONALITIES.



HABITAT CELEBRATES THE RETURN OF ESCAFARO

Escafaro is back! Catch Escafaro from January 17 to 27

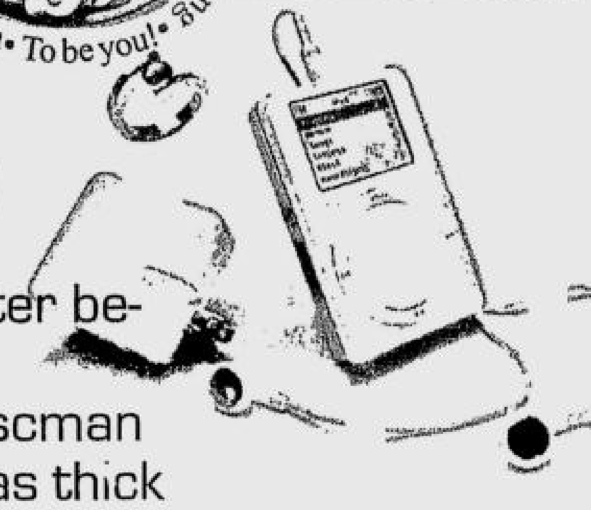
Also available: Home Bars in 16 different designs.

STORE HOURS:
9:00am TO 6:00pm

Habitat 26 YEARS
The LifeStyle Center Pines Corner Sheridan Mandaluyong 636 4115 636 5141

iLove iPod

By Tammy David
2bU! Correspondent



MY Christmas wish last year was for my sister in the United States to come home for the holidays. Aside from the fact that I have not seen her in a long time and I was wishing she would bring me home some DVDs, I also wanted to check out her iPod, Apple's ultra-hip MP3 player which she had been bragging about for some time now. My sister didn't come home but my wish was partly granted by my long-lost cousin Myra from Partners Group. Myra lent me an iPod, and even included a Flower power iMac (with OS-X), for two whole weeks. Let the music odyssey begin!

> 'The iPod was 10 times better because I had a Discman that was as thick as a sandwich and I had to bring a CD album with 20 discs'

My iPod intro

"I hope this sucks, I hope this sucks…" I told myself over and over while Chris from Apple gave me a 101 course on the iPod. When I learned how to transfer songs, I immediately looked for the package sent by Sony Music weeks ago. I transferred the new albums of Macy Gray, Cake, Rhona and Lil Bow-wow. The whole procedure took about an hour. I really did not dig their music so I decided to check out new stuff using the iPod. Music was ok but the iPod was excellent! "Why can't you be a lemmonnn? Why are you so great? Darn!" I screamed at the innocent gadget. Sheesh, now I have to starve to death again so I can have one of these.

If it's Apple, it must be hip

Apple has received prestigious awards in design. A lot of people wanted the iMac because "*Ang* cute!" not because it was fast or it had this or that. In the case of the 185-gram iPod, it wasn't candy colored like the iMac but it had a unique and elegant compact design. At the back, the casing was made of stainless steel (but it gets scratched and marked by fingerprints) while Lucite was used in front.

It was compact enough for me to bring and listen to during class and Mass…ooops. But I don't know if it's durable enough since, miraculously, I have not dropped it yet.

One thing I enjoyed about the design was the large scroll wheel and the screen, which was easy to view. It was also easy for impatient people like me to switch to the next song. Since the color was white, it got dirty easily too but it really looked great. I was a head-turner for a day in Glorietta 4 when I was walking around with it although some probably thought I was wearing a hearing aid because of the white earphones. I didn't have a manual but the system was really easy to operate.

1,000 songs?!

The iPod has a 5GB hard drive and fire wire connection instead of USB. This allows you to transfer half the inventory of Music One in a week. My sister said by the time you had transferred 500 songs from other players, the artists' records would already be transferred to the oldies section or would have appeared on MTV Classic. In my first week, I only transferred 342 songs. That was almost half of my collection. You could also organize your songs and put them on play lists. To be more organized, I groups the songs by genres, live versions, bootlegs and artists. I had about 30 play lists—almost all the DMBs songs, all kinds of rock, my favorite oldies, bossa nova, and the whole "Rent," "Evita" and, err, "Annie" (yes, I'm queer) albums in my Broadway folder. I even had a classical folder with Bach and Mozart in it. But I kept listening to "India Arie" and the "Hey, Mr. Taliban" song, which I had on repeat.

The iPod was 10 times better for me because I had a Discman that was as thick as a sandwich and I had to bring a CD album with 20 discs, adding more weight to my load. I used to have a Bossa Nova day but, with the iPod, I could listen to anything I wanted. Being a music lover had never been this fun.

The disadvantage

After listing the pros, the con thing for me was its cost. At P25,000, it would be expensive for the average Filipino-PC-User-music-lover. You would also need a Mac (the latest mouth-watering model costs P85,000) to use it. But if you're willing to switch your PC life to a MacAddict then you would enjoy lots of perks besides the iPod like iMovie, iPhoto and other fancy Apple programs.

Also, listening to more than a 100 different songs a day can be really intoxicating. Final verdict: Will somebody tell Bill Gates to hurry up with his version?!

For more info, visit www.apple.com or call 848-6931 to 34 or visit the G/F Eurovilla 2 Building, 118 Herrera St., Legazpi Village, Makati City.

E-mail the author at chris_trent_thom @lycos.com

Get those boots now before they're too hot to wear

I FELL in love with boots. They are so chic and sexy at the same time. Which length and style would be advisable to get? They are quite expensive and all I need is a good black pair. Please help me decide. I wear a lot of slacks and skirts in the office and when I go out.

CELIA

> Boots will only be fashionable from September to mid-February in this country

Kinny Salas

Let your wardrobe and legs decide. Ankle boots are great for pants and long ankle skimming skirts with no slits. These should suit your purpose and will be the most comfy of all three lengths because they wouldn't be so hot to wear. Do not wear them with a mini though. That will be a total fashion crime. Boots that are thigh-high or right below the knee are great with mini and micro skirts as well as long skirts and bootlegs. They camouflage big calves or bow legs but will you really wear them? If you are the type that gets self-conscious when people stare—forget it! They are also a bit hot even during our cold season.

Midcalf boots are a great compromise if you want something you can wear with all the dressing options above, but if you are wearing a knee-length skirt, they can make your legs look short because the shoes cut right across them. For midcalf boots, skirts should also be midcalf to longer or mid-thigh and higher.

Note: Boots will only be fashionable from September to mid-February in this country. As soon as its warm, open toe sandals all the way. You can wear your boots again next September to February so don't throw them away. They are practical during the rainy season, too. Pick a square-toed style or a slim one with rounded tips. Thick or wide heels are best, too. Stilettos and deadly weapon-pointed fronts may look vampy but they are not worth the pain and distortion they inflict on your feet and toes.

* * *

If I can only have one color of a bag, which should it be? Black or brown? There's a bag I am interested in but it is very expensive so I can only afford one. I usually have three different colors of one bag for different occasions. Help!

JOCELYN

I know exactly what you are going through. Times like this, I narrow down my choices by opening my closet and checking my favorite outfits that can go with the bag I'm eyeing. What colors dominate? Are they more brown or black? These are the colors that complement your skin and hair shades you see. I then pick out the bag color to suit the majority of the outfits. If by any chance there is an equal number of clothes in both brown and black (unlucky you) and you look good in both, remember that it is harder to find a great brown bag than a black one.

* * *

I sometimes leave the hair dye on my hair too long that I end up with colored scalp and it takes forever to rinse off excess color. What do I do in times like these?

LOU ANNE

Rinse off twice with mild dishwashing liquid. You know, the type that's gentle on hands? Dilute with little water and give your scalp a rubdown. Lather and rinse twice. I emphasize gentle liquid so you don't strip off color totally.

For any questions, or products you want to road-test, write to Makeover 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 897-4805

Find out what's shimmering . . .
L'ORÉAL
PARiS
in cooperation with
metro and FUBU
@ seveneightorange

Guess who is all set to pump new flavor into the club scene with music inspired by a young and thriving urban culture? Beginning , this Thursday, January 24th from 10PM and every other Thursday of the month thereafter, experience L'OREAL PARIS latest multi-faceted haircolour with **FERIA** at **JUICE** a fresh new concept in Clubbing.

Groove to slamming Hiphop, R&B and soul and get a chance to be chosen as a FERIA TRIBE member where you have the opportunity to score for yourself a loot bag with the latest haircolour from FERIA with 2x the highlights—absolutely FREE! This thursday's theme is **GHETTO SHIMMER**. Lucky few who dress in theme best will also win a prize. So check out the upcoming MARCH issue of METRO and find out who made the cut as the first FERIA TRIBE members.

Heads up! all ladies get in for free 'til midnight and its 50% off on selected drinks also until midnight, so get your rears in gear and get ready to bust it!

See you @ Seveneightorange, 7840 Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Feria's Milla Jovovich (supermodel, actress) is wearing 36 Chocolate Cherry, Beyonce Knowles (pop singer, *Destiny's Child*) is wearing 74 Copper Shimmer, and Jessica Alba (actress, *Dark Angel*) is wearing 66 Brilliant Bordeaux.

Filmless Films
in cooperation with Ayala Cinemas and Canon present

the digital moviefest 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
this January @ greenbelt cinema1

Digital Full Length Films

Critically-acclaimed foreign and local full-length features from icons of independent cinema such as Kidlat Tahimik, Rob Nilsson, Raymond Red, Todd Verow, Mike De Leon, Dogme95, Juan Pula and Digital Talkies of India.

Silvershorts

An eclectic showcase of short films from the Silvershorts collection, of all genres and formats.

Panels & Seminars

Time: 9am-12 pm
Venue: Greenbelt Cinema 1

DIGITAL FREEDOM!
Free Digital Film Workshops for the Common Man

January 23 Digital Creativity
January 24 ROB NILSSON: Master Class
January 25 Digital Camera techniques: Professional and Broadcast
January 26 Cinematography for Digital Filmmakers
January 27 Digital Animation: 2D and 3D
January 28 Digital Editing
January 29 Digital Sound
January 30 Panel: Digital Revolution: The Future of Film

ALL SEMINARS ARE FREE!

Exhibitions and New Media

A video installation by video artists showing the many forms that video,as an art form, can take. Also, an exhibit of the latest in digital film technology by Canon.

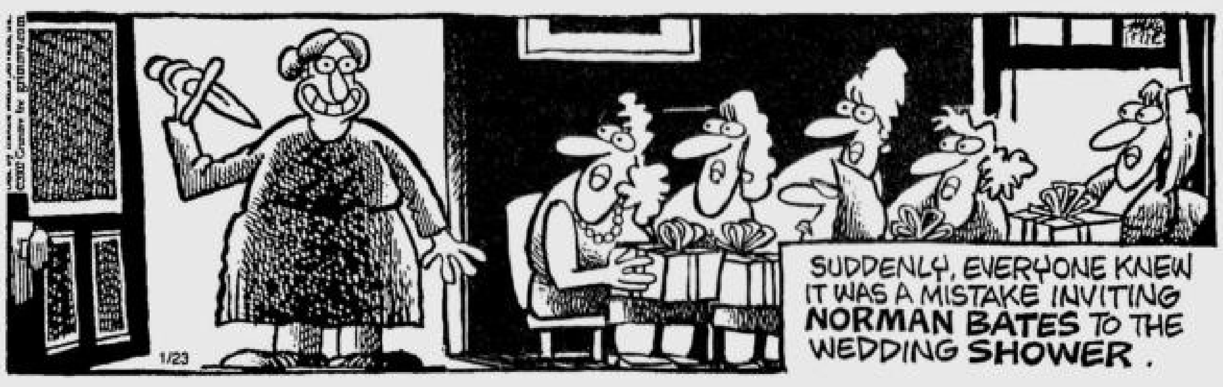
The Digital Revolution Starts Here

For details contact us at 921-8434 and 433-3496 or email oracafe@rocketmail.com

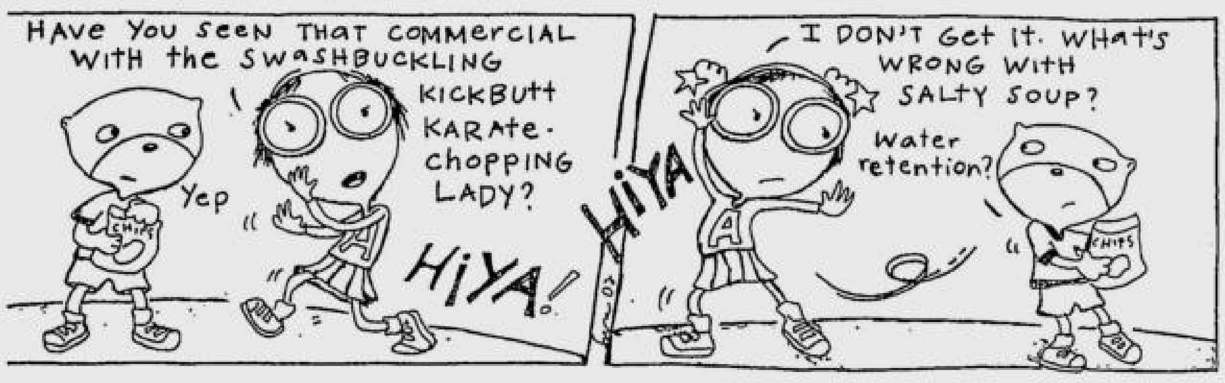
Check out our wewbsite at www.mov.moviespage.com

Canon
City Garden Hotels
JVC
LG Digitally yours
SOLID VIDEO CORPORATION
JUST FEELING ENT
18th ave artist studio

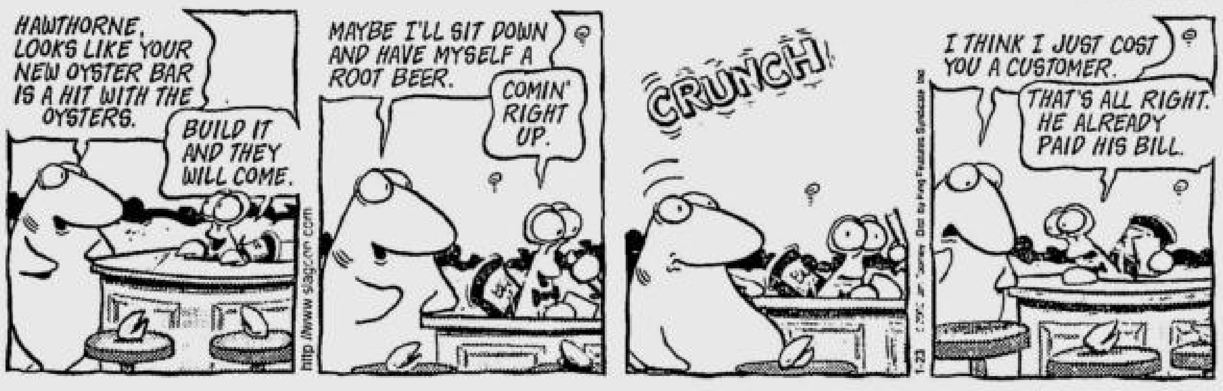
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM
BY MIKE PETERS


1/23
SUDDENLY, EVERYONE KNEW IT WAS A MISTAKE INVITING NORMAN BATES TO THE WEDDING SHOWER.

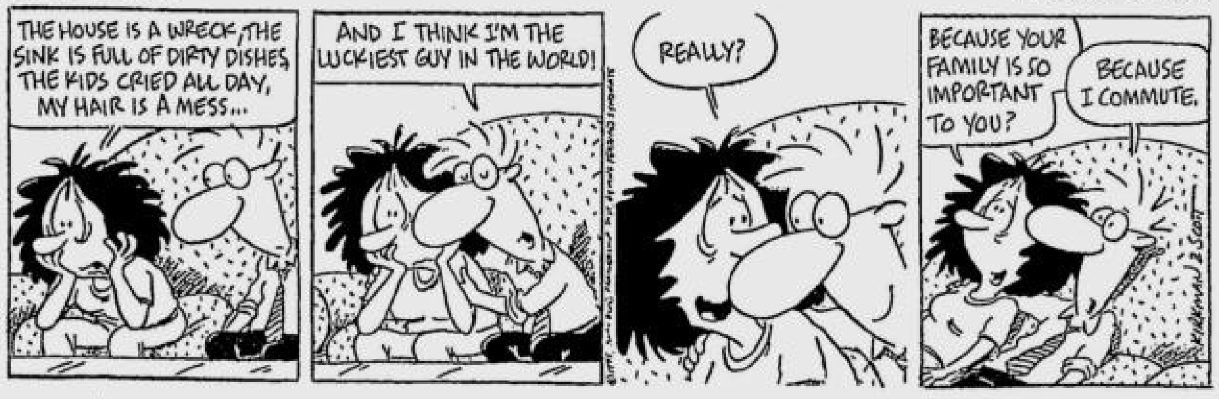
ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HAVE YOU SEEN THAT COMMERCIAL WITH THE SWASHBUCKLING KICKBUTT KARATE-CHOPPING LADY?
Yep
HIYA!
HIYA
I DON'T GET IT. WHAT'S WRONG WITH SALTY SOUP?
Water retention?
CHIPS

SHERMAN'S LAGOON
BY JIM TOOMEY


HAWTHORNE, LOOKS LIKE YOUR NEW OYSTER BAR IS A HIT WITH THE OYSTERS.
BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME.
MAYBE I'LL SIT DOWN AND HAVE MYSELF A ROOT BEER.
COMIN' RIGHT UP.
CRUNCH!
I THINK I JUST COST YOU A CUSTOMER.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT. HE ALREADY PAID HIS BILL.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


THE HOUSE IS A WRECK, THE SINK IS FULL OF DIRTY DISHES, THE KIDS CRIED ALL DAY, MY HAIR IS A MESS...
AND I THINK I'M THE LUCKIEST GUY IN THE WORLD!
REALLY?
BECAUSE YOUR FAMILY IS SO IMPORTANT TO YOU?
BECAUSE I COMMUTE.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Tiffani Thiessen, Jeanne Moreau, Princess Caroline, Chita Rivera, Brendan Shanahan

Happy Birthday: Don't let something come between you and your loved ones. You will need to prove to those around you that you are capable of reaching your goals. Be prepared for a challenge. Your numbers are 9, 20, 27, 31, 38, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Talk to anyone you can about your future and your goals. The more you mingle with prestigious people the quicker your talent will be recognized.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): This is a great day for romance. Plan an evening for two. If you've been doing things perfectly you will get the praise you deserve when the job is complete.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You may be feeling depressed, especially if you are infatuated with someone you can't have. You are best to rid yourself of dead weight and move on.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You should be taking part in meetings that offer help to a cause you appreciate. Don't let anyone talk you into donating financially. It will be enough if you offer your time.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Someone at work may not be on your side. Don't divulge information regarding your intentions. Make a few changes around your home. Don't let someone you like take advantage of you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Take the time to explain how you would do things especially to those younger and less experienced. You will be able to inspire enthusiasm and confidence in others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Money matters will be foremost on your mind. You will be in a high cycle regarding work so put in some overtime or pick up a part-time job.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): If someone is being difficult, don't bother arguing. Do something you enjoy instead. Join a group with interesting people you can relate to.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Eat foods you know will not upset your stomach. You should be checking out a worthwhile investment or updating your portfolio.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will be in a romantic mood and can count on romance highlighting your day. This is not the best day to make an investment.

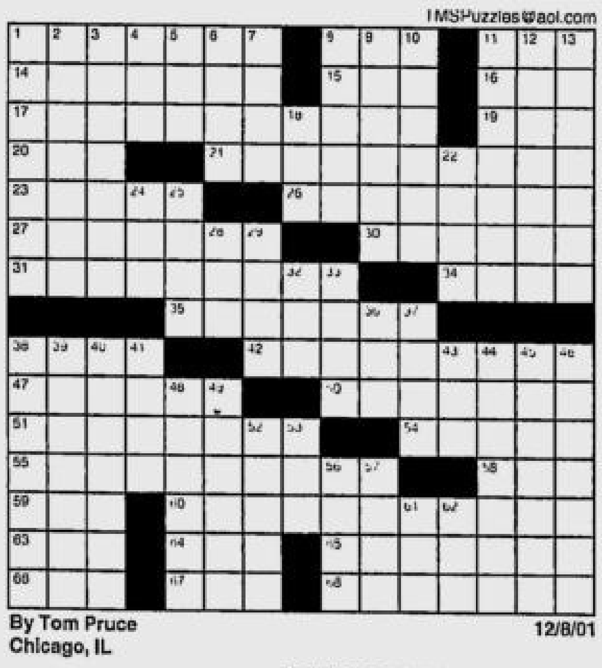
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You aren't likely to agree with what everyone else at home wants to do. You will have the patience and desire to start something creative.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You will be in a talkative mood. An older member of your family may need a helping hand. Don't hesitate you will be rewarded for your good deed.

Birthday Baby: Home is important to you, and you will do whatever is necessary to keep the peace. You will always be on hand to help anyone in the family who is in need. Once you make your mind up you aren't likely to change it.

DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL
12/8/01

ACROSS
1 Map volumes
8 Ballet step
11 Qns. or Bklyn.
14 Virtuosity
15 NAFTA participant
16 Afore
17 Dessert for Chiquita?
19 Flit about
20 10 of calendars
21 Hunt for bargains
23 Greek letter
26 Powerful explosive
27 Actor Stamp
30 Backbones
31 Fairway hazards
34 Pop quiz
35 Franks
38 "Silkwood" star
42 Superlatively thick
47 Tablecloths and sheets
50 Love affair
51 Disgraces
54 John Jacob or Mary
55 Robin's sweetie
58 Color
59 False front
60 Jurassic creatures
63 Org. of Flyers and Jets
64 Do-over tennis service
65 Mid-ocean
66 Draw
67 Meese and Wynn
68 Repairers

DOWN
1 George and Bud
2 Windpipe
3 Ronald Frame novel, "The __ Bearers"
4 Ms. Gardner
5 Day light?
6 Historical periods
7 Window part
8 Mushy
9 Thais and Koreans, e.g.
10 Persian governor
11 Rumbalike dance
12 Manual of tennis
13 Most embarrassed
18 Crowd of whales
22 Overlook
24 Ballplayer Williams
25 Lit. collection
28 __-Magnon
29 Snacks
32 L.A. summer hrs.
33 Go off, as milk
36 Govt. publishing grp.
37 Lower layer of Earth's outer crust
38 Demanding attention
39 Electronics giant
40 Give a right
41 Be a bookworm
43 The German
44 Bubble over with excitement
45 Diligent searcher
46 Wright and Brewer
48 Light on one's feet
49 Caught
52 Jogs
53 Wickedness
56 Molecule part
57 Slangy denial
61 D.C. VIP
62 Also

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

H	E	E	L	■	A	V	I	D	■	B	A	S	S	I
A	C	R	E	■	D	A	T	A	■	O	R	I	O	N
G	R	A	N	T	S	L	A	M	H	O	M	E	R	S
S	U	S	I	E	■	E	L	S	E	■	O	G	E	E
■	■	■	N	A	S	T	Y	■	A	R	R	E	S	T
D	E	S	I	R	E	■	■	P	R	E	Y	■	■	■
A	C	E	S	■	R	O	T	A	T	E	■	T	O	P
T	H	E	M	A	R	S	H	A	L	L	A	R	T	S
E	O	N	■	G	A	L	O	R	E	■	N	U	T	S
■	■	■	V	E	T	O	■	■	S	H	I	E	S	T
A	S	S	I	S	I	■	D	O	S	E	S	■	■	■
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R	E	S	E	W	■	O	R	E	S	■	S	A	S	S

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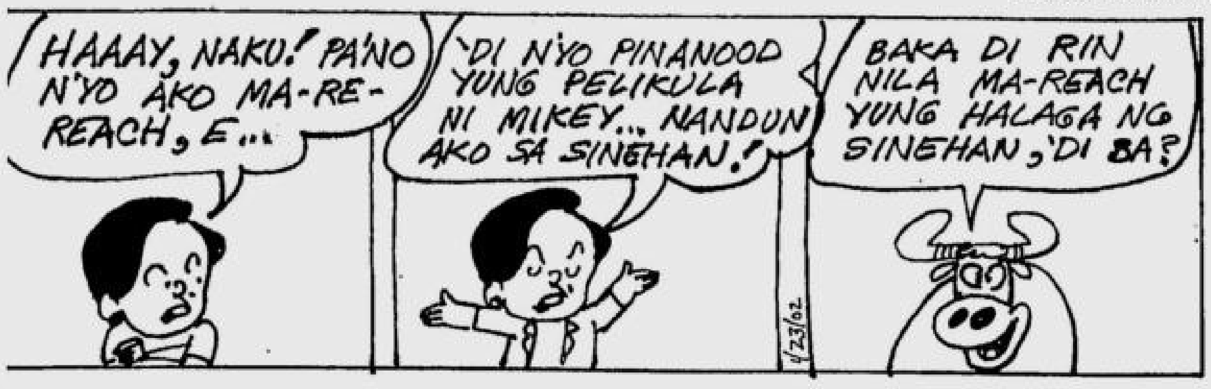
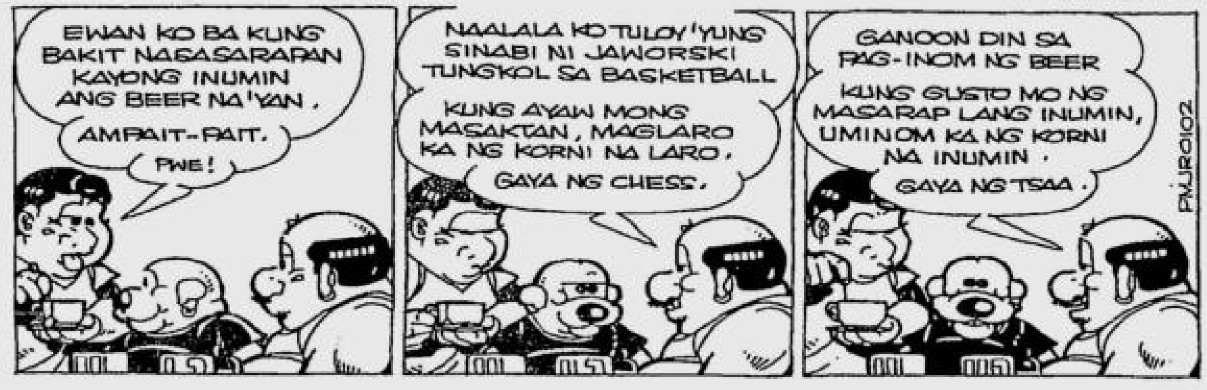
12/8/01

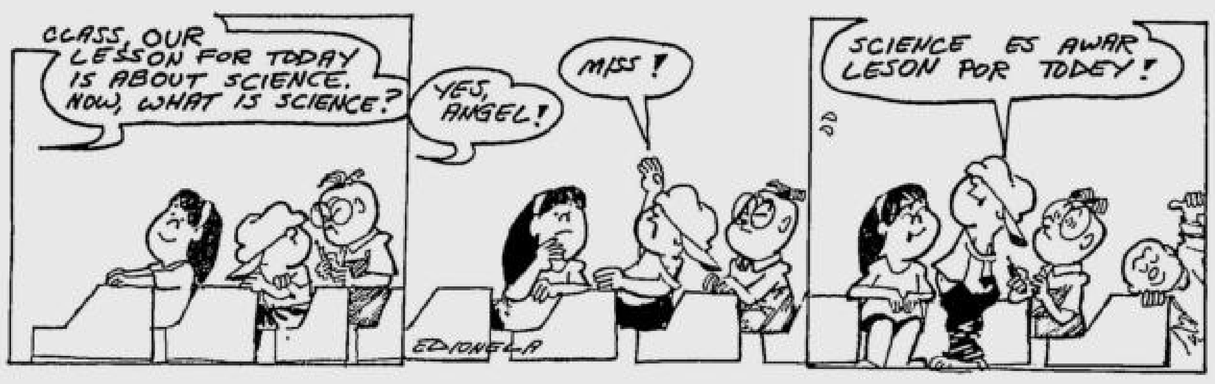
A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


HAAAY, NAKU! PA'NO N'YO AKO MA-RE-REACH, E...
'DI N'YO PINANOOD YUNG PELIKULA NI MIKEY... NANDUN AKO SA SINEHAN!
BAKA DI RIN NILA MA-REACH YUNG HALAGA NG SINEHAN, 'DI BA?
1/23/02

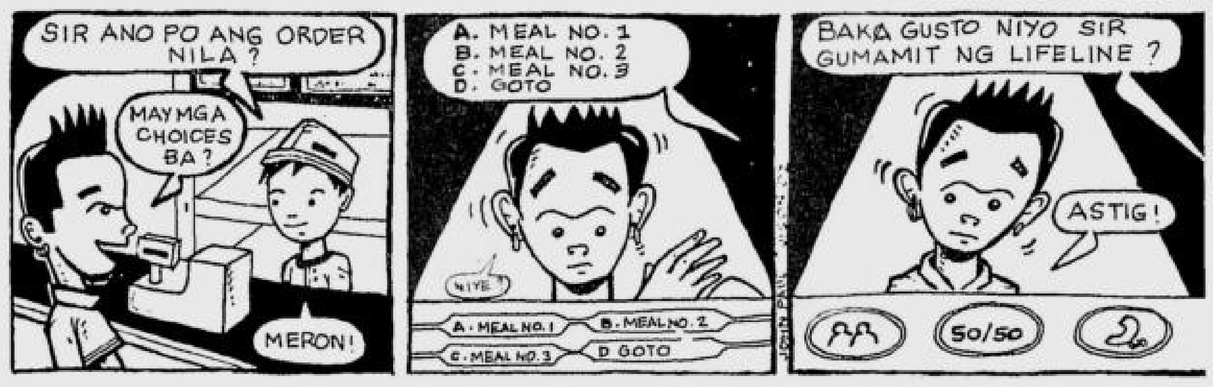
PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


EWAN KO BA KUNG BAKIT NAGASARAPAN KAYONG INUMIN ANG BEER NA'YAN.
AMPAIT-PAIT.
PWE!
NAALALA KO TULOY 'YUNG SINABI NI JAWORSKI TUNGKOL SA BASKETBALL
KUNG AYAW MONG MASAKTAN, MAGLARO KA NG KORNI NA LARO.
GAYA NG CHESS.
GANOON DIN SA PAG-INOM NG BEER
KUNG GUSTO MO NG MASARAP LANG INUMIN, UMINOM KA NG KORNI NA INUMIN.
GAYA NG TSAA.
PMJR0102

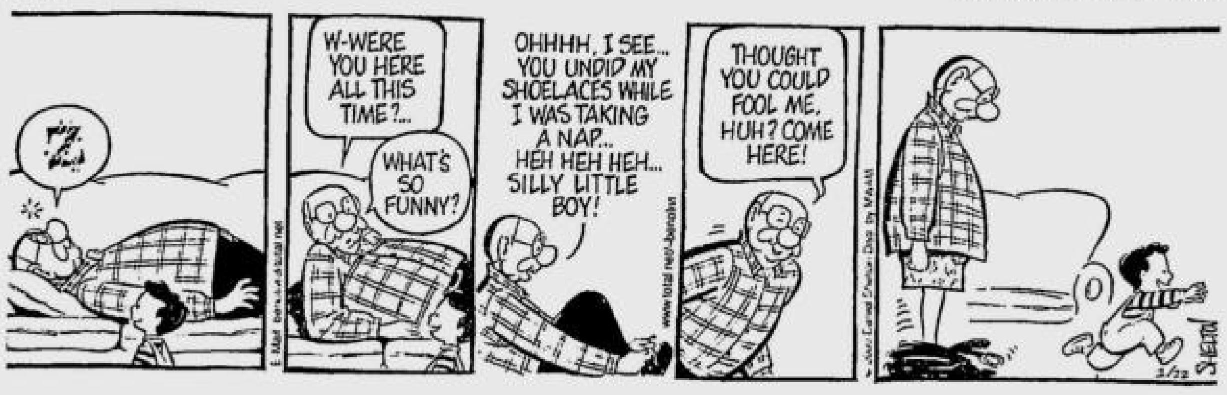
SIMO
BY EDGAR DIONELA


CLASS, OUR LESSON FOR TODAY IS ABOUT SCIENCE. NOW, WHAT IS SCIENCE?
YES, ANGEL!
MISS!
SCIENCE ES AWAR LESON POR TODEY!
EDIONELA

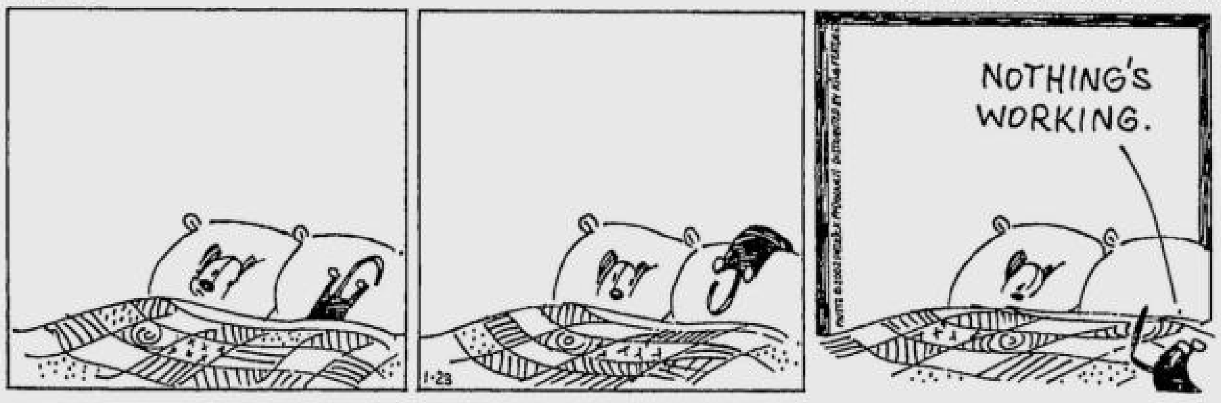
GARAPATA BLOOD
BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


SIR ANO PO ANG ORDER NILA?
MAY MGA CHOICES BA?
MERON!
A. MEAL NO. 1
B. MEAL NO. 2
C. MEAL NO. 3
D. GOTO
NIYE
A. MEAL NO. 1
B. MEAL NO. 2
C. MEAL NO. 3
D GOTO
BAKA GUSTO NIYO SIR GUMAMIT NG LIFELINE?
ASTIG!
50/50

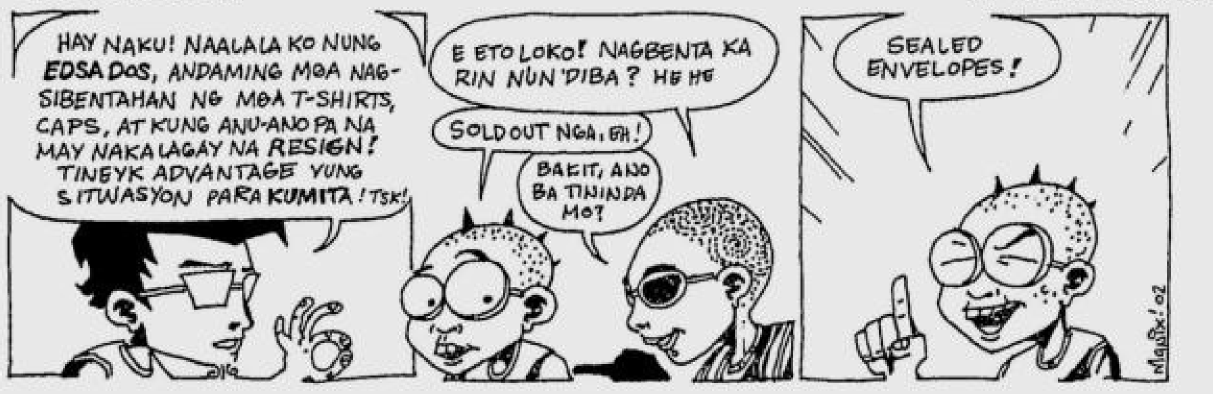
BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


Z
W-WERE YOU HERE ALL THIS TIME?...
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
OHHHH, I SEE... YOU UNDID MY SHOELACES WHILE I WAS TAKING A NAP... HEH HEH HEH... SILLY LITTLE BOY!
THOUGHT YOU COULD FOOL ME, HUH? COME HERE!
SHELTON

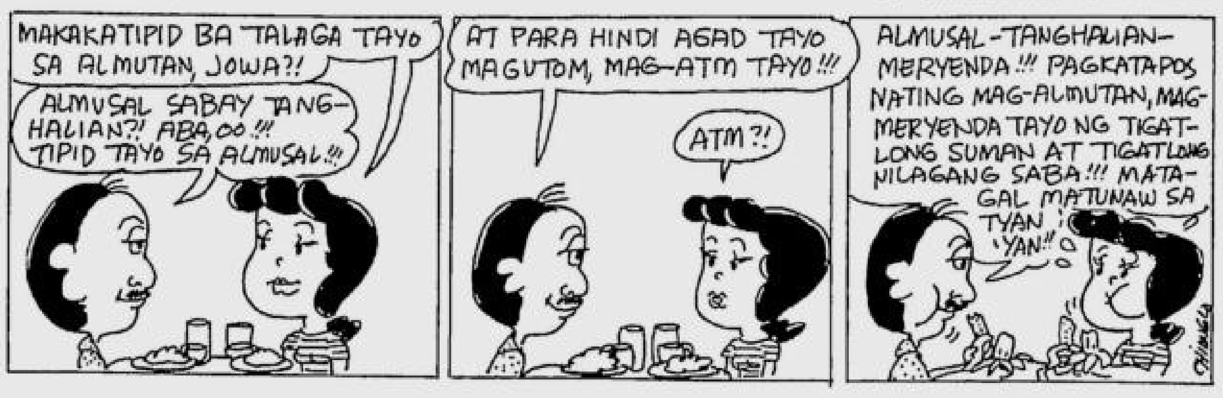
MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


1-23
NOTHING'S WORKING.

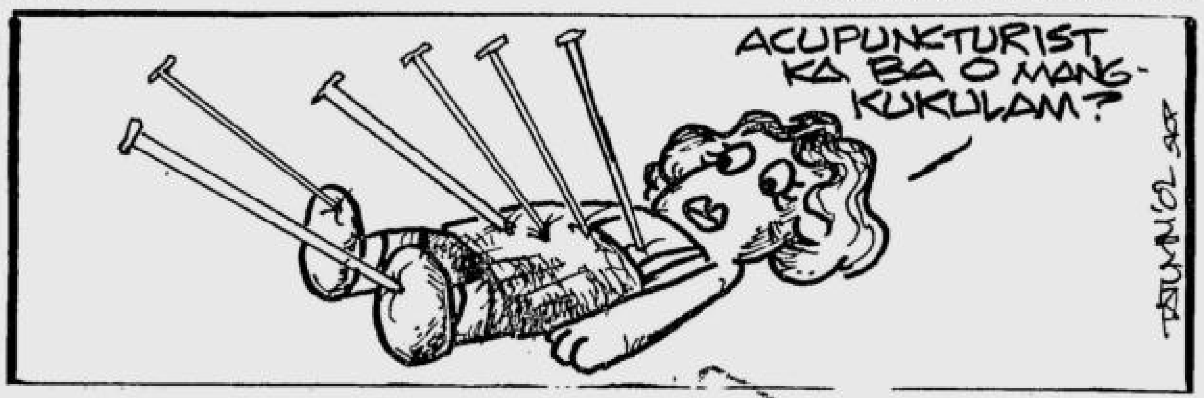
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


HAY NAKU! NAALALA KO NUNG EDSA DOS, ANDAMING MGA NAG-SIBENTAHAN NG MGA T-SHIRTS, CAPS, AT KUNG ANU-ANO PA NA MAY NAKALAGAY NA RESIGN! TINEYK ADVANTAGE YUNG SITWASYON PARA KUMITA! TSK!
E ETO LOKO! NAGBENTA KA RIN NUN 'DIBA? HE HE
SOLD OUT NGA, EH!
BAKIT, ANO BA TININDA MO?
SEALED ENVELOPES!
MaNix! 02

LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MAKAKATIPID BA TALAGA TAYO SA ALMUTAN, JOWA?!
ALMUSAL SABAY TANGHALIAN?! ABA, OO!!! TIPID TAYO SA ALMUSAL!!!
AT PARA HINDI AGAD TAYO MAGUTOM, MAG-ATM TAYO!!!
ATM?!
ALMUSAL-TANGHALIAN-MERYENDA!!! PAGKATAPOS NATING MAG-ALMUTAN, MAG-MERYENDA TAYO NG TIGAT-LONG SUMAN AT TIGATLONG NILAGANG SABA!!! MATAGAL MATUNAW SA TYAN 'YAN!!

TULDOK
BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


ACUPUNKTURIST KA BA O MANG-KUKULAM?
TATUM '02

Send in Sendo

GABRIEL H. MERCADO
2bU! Correspondent

sendo J500 SERIES

The Sendo j520 is an everyday mobile phone noted for its looks and fun features

THE P6,390 Sendo j520 500 Series is the midrange model of the recently released Sendo phones, with the 800 Series at the top and the more affordable 200 Series at the bottom. It took a visit to their website (www.sendo.com) to figure out the model number as its box had "500 series" all over it, but only a tiny j520 on a sticker at the side. More oddities are noted along the way.

For those who put a high premium on looks, the Sendo 500 Series will not disappoint. A detachable, sleek, aluminum-like casing and keypad matched with a translucent back cover (blue in my case) is an interesting match and quite cool to the eye. It's very light at 75 g and small at 79cc, making it easy to put in a breast pocket or a small purse. The wide 96x64 resolution, six-line display is easy to read when lit, but a little difficult when not, making it a strain to check the time without having to press a button to light it up.

The phone maximizes its six-line display by using high-resolution but occasionally weird picture messages to indicate functions. You get a toolbox with a power drill for Settings and a Rubik's cube (remember that?) and game pad for Extras, which are actually games.

Features

The phone features WAP 1.2.1 with WTLS class 2—Microsoft Mobile ExplorerWAP, which I didn't try. I'm sure it worked, but who cares? A letdown is the phone does not have internal memory, so you can only save numbers on your SIM card. Strangely you cannot save a name longer than five characters. So "candy's office" will have to be saved as "cdyof." Not very helpful.

Let's get to the important part: Texting. Sending and receiving text messages is pretty easy with this phone, which seems to have taken notes from Nokia with its almost similar commands. One button sends you instantly to Write Messages, and reading a received message is pressing one button as well. Strangely again, received messages do not have a time-stamp even though the phone has a clock. Message capacity is limited to the SIM, and when writing messages Predictive Text is default. That's good for users of that feature, but not for me as I don't enjoy having to turn it off each time I text.

Sendo invested big-time making this a "fun" phone via cutesy features galore, namely: Smiley SMS, Chat and a full-featured RingTone Composer.

There are a lot of Smileys categories to choose from, namely: Emotions, Celebrations, Sports, Animals and Others, with at least 14 premade high-resolution designs to choose from. It's nice but again perplexing as you can only send a full one to another Sendo phone.

Non-Sendo phones get the normal "ü." Anyone who has tried Chat knows it's just another way of sending SMS. It is displayed in a traditional chat "window" à la personal computer.

The Ringtone Composer is extreme, with text or graphic entry methods and buttons that can transform a two-thirds note and even control duration, sharpness and tempo. Get this: it even has an Equalizer, with settings for treble, bass and normal. Unfortunately you can only save up to five ring tones at a time. However, other phones can play your compositions as well. Ringtone composer fanatics should take note of this phone.

Finally, Extras a.k.a. Games feature Quaddro, which is more popularly known as Pinochle, Splash, which is actually Pipes, and TenPin, which is just that. Of these, Quaddro is the one I like best and is quite addicting. Splash would have been fun, but it is really badly designed. The game requires "water" to pass through pipes you create. The problem is it takes forever to pass through, making a result take far too long to finish. All games are high-resolution and use the six-line display to the max. Unfortunately, the phone cannot save high scores due again to the limited memory.

Performance

The lithium-ion battery's performance and claimed 235 hours standby time (100 minutes of talk time) are pretty good. I had the phone for a full week and needed to recharge it only twice, not including the first time I got it. Usability while going about your daily business is no different than that of any ordinary small phone. The tiny buttons give good feedback but are sometimes tough to press for my large fingers.

The Sendo j250's main feature is its looks. It neither feels like a "guy" nor a "girl" phone. It's a real eye-catcher and stands out in the crowd, which is important to the person who wants something different. Light and compact, the roundish design and metal-like finish give it a durable feel. Although saddled with limited memory capacity, all in all the Sendo j520 is a good daily phone and an easy-to-use text machine. If you can put up with its limitations, it's a good phone with basic features plus some fun stuff added in.

Sendo's entry into the phone-crazy Philippine market brings yet another exciting choice into the multitude of brands and models available to the Pinoy consumer. I look forward to seeing more from this serious player, especially with their high-end PDA/phone Z series.

E-mail the author at gary@exchange.ph

Beautiful Shirley Manson; oh, yeah, Garbage, too

BY QUARK HENARES
Contributor

GARBAGE at Madison Square Garden

I KNOW that this is a blatant, grat uitous, obvious plug, but God bless Jet Galang and Sony Music Filipinas. For years now I've been begging producers to bring really good acts over (read: Garbage), but because of our economy and the rising dollar rate, we've recently only been bringing sure hits over to these shores (read: boy bands and coed teen groups). Realizing that Garbage wouldn't be sent here anytime soon, I did the next best thing; I had myself sent to Garbage.

On Oct. 24 at the legendary Madison Square Garden in New York City, I had the pleasure of seeing the band open for U2, and the night turned out to be my best concert experience ever. I was actually late for Garbage, coming in on the second song of their set, "Special." Missing the opening number "Push It" was enough of a lesson for me to never come late again.

The whole time I was just sitting down, my mouth agape, not believing that the band was actually in front of me, the members two inches large in my eyes. They then performed their brilliant catchy hit "I Think I'm Paranoid," which pretty much woke me up and had me shouting "Yeah! Woo!" frat-boy style.

The thing about Garbage is that during live performances, they're very different from what their albums offer. Being greatly electronic, their albums are more textured with beeps, drum machine beats, scratches, loops and whatnot. This isn't to say that when live they're as good. Onstage, their valor is more raw and spontaneous, less slick but more exciting.

Right mix

And a lot of this is because of Shirley Manson. Yes, if girls have their Howie, Justin and Joey, then I have my Shirley. The Edinburgh native, who was pretty difficult to understand ("wair reelly prood tae be hair tonight") provided the right mix of toughness, riot girrrl appeal, kineticism and seductiveness to keep the crowd jumping. She was very down to earth, too, thanking U2 for allowing Garbage to tour with them, saying that the experience was "just like going to rock 'n' roll school."

Throughout the 45-minute set (yes, can you believe that? Only 45 frickin' minutes!) she was bouncing around the stage with her humongous suspenders, baggy pants, white tank top and bleached, slicked-back, Draco Malfoy hair, proving herself to be one of the most consummately talented vocalists working today.

Oh why, oh why can't we bring Garbage over to Manila? Answer: Because they don't sing the songs of Brian McKnight and David Pomeranz. And they're not as cute as Justin, Nick, Shane, Ronan and Stephen

This isn't to say, of course, that her band mates aren't worth their weight in ticket sales. Although relatively motionless and still, you know that guitarists Steve Marker and Duke Erikson and drummer Butch Vig are the reason the band sounds so good. Another testament to this is the band's latest album, "Beautiful Garbage," which was worth the three-year wait.

'Cooking' music

Although no longer quintessential examples of driving music like the last two albums, "Beautiful Garbage" is a great band to listen to while… cooking. I know "cooking music" doesn't sound exactly as cool as "driving music," but that's just what this album is: A tribute to rock 'n' roll and pop that you can't help but dance and sing with while cleaning your room or cooking food.

This effort not only restyles and redoes classy doo-wop by shelling out love songs like the sentimental "Can't Cry These Tears," but also builds on, twists and trashes the rules so knowingly and tongue-in-cheekily that it could only come from the mind of Butch Vig, whom Bono from U2 calls "a sick, sick man" in the concert.

The best examples of this are "Androgyny" and "'Til the Day I Die," which they performed during the set on Oct. 24. Both are very traditional rock songs, putting to use the verse-chorus-verse-chorus-bridge-chorus formula, but turning the product inside out with a lot of hip-hop scratches, guitar FX noises, loops and, let's not forget Manson's vengeful lyricism.

They ended their set too quickly, Manson thanking the crowd and giving a little speech before she left. She said it was a pleasure playing in New York City, a city that showed so much courage and warmth after a disaster that was cold and evil. She dedicated the last song, "Cherry Lips," to the city, singing the lyrics "you shine the light on hidden parts/you make the whole world wanna dance/you bought yourself a second chance/go baby go go/we're right behind you/yeah we're looking at you."

I don't think any other line would have been more apt to end as exciting, respectful and fun a set as that was. Now if only we can get some show producer who knows the value of true talent to bring them over here.

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20 TRIBU PWEDE KANG MAKISAYA!
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HALA!
KAINAN NA!
WALANG KATAPUSANG LITSONG MANOK, BABOY AT BAKA!
SANGKATUTAK NA BILIHIN DIN SA MGA SOUVENIR SHOPS!
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Araneta Coliseum Green Gate

HALA!
MGA BANDA!
Featuring ALAMID, RIGHTEOUS ACT, CHILLWORX
Saturday, Jan. 26, 7 pm onwards
Coliseum Circle
Araneta Coliseum Green Gate

HALA!
STREET PARTY at FIREWORKS na,
babaha pa ng serbesa!
Jan. 26, 7 pm onwards • Coliseum Circle
Araneta Coliseum

HALA!
Sto. NIÑO
PRUSISYON NA!
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"I'M not promiscuous. I'm not your stereotypical gay man."

'Prima donna' comes clean on 'Survivor 3'

Brandon Quinton, the bartender who swept women off their feet with his good looks only to disappoint them because he's gay, says he was asked to pose nude for the gay porn mag Freshman. He turned it down

BY JASON DOPLITO

SURVIVOR 1" had Richard Hatch. "Survivor 2" had Jeff Varner. Now comes Brandon Quinton, the 25-year-old bartender who swept women off their feet with his good looks, then dashed their hopes when they all saw how "out" he was on the show. Nevertheless, he remained a favorite until the very end of his 27-day struggle in Kenya. 2bU!, through the AXN channel, got to talk to the man who was once a makeup artist, got married (gasp!) and had Chapstick as his "Survivor" luxury item. And up until the interview, he didn't fail to surprise us with his sassy comments. Find out what made him cry the day Lindsey got voted off, what he wish Silas had done, and everything else behind "Survivor 3."

You and the other members of the Samburu tribe got some slack for being lazy, prompting Carl to tell something like this generation is not driven or motivated to achieve their goals. What is your reaction to that?

I wouldn't say that. I think this generation is just as driven and goal-oriented as the previous. And in fairness to us, I don't think you can call us lazy. We wake up at 7 a.m. which is still early, you know. The older members of the tribe, they wake up at 5 a.m. and that is *very* early. Also, it was part of our (younger members) strategy to make them do all the work. Since we were the stronger alliance, we made them do the cleaning, cooking and stuff, while we got to lie around.

And same with the switch... you guys made the Boran guys do all the work.

In a way, yeah. But I just have to say that Kelley lay in bed with us as well, so it was just Big Tom and Lex who did the work.

How did you prepare for this game?

Aside from putting on weight, I had to quit smoking. During the game, they put me on a nicotine patch, and it was somewhere on my butt so you guys won't see it.

What was Lindsey like out there?

You know how she looked like in TV whining and stuff? She's much worse! I'm telling you! She's basically lazier and whinier than she actually appeared on TV.

Yeah, but you were close to her, right? In fact you were quite emotional when she got voted off the show.

Well, I was crying because she was finally gone. It was just that I was frustrated and depressed and these emotions had been pent-up inside me for too long. I let go of all those during that particular tribal council, some sort of anxiety relief. But definitely, when you saw me crying that night, deep inside I was rejoicing that Lindsey was finally gone. It was hard putting up with her.

How about Linda? Was she as freaky as she was on TV?

Her Mother Africa crap didn't really affect me at all. I guess since she had been to the continent so many times, she seemed to be a know-it-all. Linda was just spiritual although I never bought her voodoo, hocus-pocus stuff in the first place.

What was it like being on the team with Silas? Did you get to see him naked?

(Laughter) Well, we used to hang out a lot, scheming against the older folks, but I didn't get to see him naked. I wish though that he had put on those nicotine patches on me. (Laughter) Also, he appeared to be more evil when in fact, he was only doing the dirty work for me. But he wasn't really smart or manipulative at all.

By the way, who's the weirdest among you guys?

Tom. He's really weird. Well, I kinda understand because he grew up in a small town so he doesn't realize that calling people names is bad. He can really be politically incorrect. Frank is the craziest if only because of his anti-social ways.

QUINTON. Wishes to present a different view on his kind of lifestyle.

Who are your top three all-time favorite survivor?

Greg and Colleen from "Survivor 1." They looked really fun. Then Jerri from "Survivor 2." I liked the way she played the game, as well as her personality.

Now that "Survivor" has come to an end, what are your plans?

Well, I'm just going back to being a bartender in the gay bar that I used to work in. I didn't have any expectations when I joined the game. It's not like I was in it for the fame or anything like that.

Jerri was asked to pose for Playboy. Have you had any offers of that nature?

Yeah, but I didn't accept it. It's from this lousy porno mag called Freshman. That's been it so far.

Do you think that you are a good gay role model?

I'm not promiscuous, I'm not a beer drinker or do drugs. I may have been stereotyped as the usual loud, flamboyant gay man, but definitely, I cannot be stereotyped in any of those negative ways.

How would you rate yourself, with 10 being the highest, in terms of how hard you pushed yourself to win this game? And what was the toughest about the whole experience?

Ten definitely. Till the end, I gave my all. Expect perhaps during the last day because I kinda knew that I was next to go. The toughest? Probably drinking the water. It was so bad. It was like kerosene with mud. That and putting up with Lindsey... (laughter)

And your most memorable?

My most memorable would have to be when I was already a juror. We got to stay in this really luxurious resort. I had a bungalow where you can see the elephants, the sunrise, the Savannah... It was a beautiful view.

Among you contestants, who was the prima donna who gave you a run for your money?

I was the prima donna. Nobody even came close to me.

This girl's got a Heart

(From page C1)

What do you do during your spare time?

I shop! I love Ralph Lauren and Mango.

Wow! Those are expensive brands! All your earnings must have been spent there!

Yeah (Laughs!) But starting this January I have to stop *na*. It's so hard! I have a goal this year. I want to buy a condominium unit. That's why I have to really close my eyes every time I go to the mall. But my mom's gonna help me.

That's pretty impressive that you're already planning to do this considering how young you are.

Sometimes I wake up in the morning and I get so stressed out just thinking about my future. That's how I am! I guess it's my mom—she really brainwashed me to always think about my life and my future. She always told me to work hard even though I come from a good family. Like for example, if a daughter doesn't work hard, even if she comes from a good family, *parang balewala rin. 'Yung ganon*? So that's why I'm super conscious about my future.

Ok, so you love to shop. What was your latest purchase that really made you happy?

Hmm... my van. (Smiles)

What are your other goals for this year?

I want to be a singer. I hope I get to join Star Records.

Don't you ever feel like you're depriving yourself of a lot of things, like going to proms or soirees and other normal school activities?

No *naman*. I may not go to a prom but I get to attend awards night. I may not have my prom picture taken but an awards night is televised, so... (Laughs)

What about guys? Is it easier to get the attention of a cute guy now, or is it harder to court someone like you since you're in show biz?

I get calls but my dad is really strict. Plus my mom is the one who always tells me if this guy is ok or not. So right now, *wala talaga*. Guys (or having a boyfriend) are not really my priority. Not now. I want to concentrate *talaga*. I really have to be focused because if I get distracted, *naku wala na*.

Know more about Heart Evangelista at http://stars. pinoy central.com. You can also e-mail her at heartevangelista @pinoycentral.com

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Messages

WARMEST felicitations to the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers (PAPM) on its induction of officers and directors.

Organizations such as the PAPM play an important role in ensuring the existence and continued growth of industries. They promote development that is beneficial to all members and provide a network of support to overcome difficulties affecting their particular industry. By relying on the strengths of each member, the individual companies, the organization and the industry of each member, the individual companies, the organization and the industry are all able to endure and prosper through times of challenges. More important than bolstering the strength of an industry, however, is the contribution which industry-based organizations make to the growth and progress of the entire national economy.

In this regard, the PAPM has, through the years, more than lived up to its role as an organization of paint manufacturers. I commend you particularly for your cooperation with our government in undertaking projects that redound to the common good such as the creation recently of a Philippine standard for paint products.

The theme, "Leading the Industry Towards World-Class Excellence," is a further manifestation of your commitment to bring greater growth, strength and dynamism to the paint manufacturing industry. Your thrust towards excellence is truly laudable especially in the midst of challenges in today's more competitive global environment. As our administration continues to formulate policies and implement measures to attain sustainable development. I trust that the PAPM will remain at the forefront in leading the industry and national economy towards greater progress and prosperity.

I wish the success of the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers. May the induction of your new officers usher brighter days to come for PAPM and the entire industry.

Congratulations to the new officers. *Mabuhay!*

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

GREETINGS! On behalf of the incoming officers and board members of PAPM, I would like to thank the members for the trust and confidence they have placed on us. In return, the new board will work hard to pursue the goals we have defined which we believe would positively benefit the industry. Among these are efforts to improve the image and perception of paint manufacturers and their products, as the industry strives to better not only the quality of it's products but adopt measures for the care of the environment as such are the attributes of world-class products and players. Additionally, we will also continue to strengthen and I prove the current programs such as the technical programs, and such other activities that would help further strengthen the ties and friendships that bind the association.

The ability of the association to survive and grow over all these crucial years is proof that the members care, and will continue to care. This also gives us a lot of hope that the association and its members will continue to succeed in any adverse environment for as long as we continue to forge ahead as a united and committed organization. We extend our appreciation to the previous team headed by Mr. Albert Lee as well as the previous leaders of the association in providing us strong leadership and commitment.

May God bless us in our efforts and may He bestow his blessings on our nation as well.

MICHAEL SY
PAPM President, 2002-2003

IT IS with deep sense of pride that I greet the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers, Inc. on the occasion of its 41st Anniversary. This is an opportunity for us to reflect on where we have been and where we are going.

Last year, the association has gained substantial mileage in our pursuit of technical excellence. The series of comprehensive technical seminars further enhanced the capabilities of the member companies towards the realization of this goal. I thank everyone for having supported this program.

As we celebrate our achievements, we must train our eyes towards what we can do not only for ourselves but also for others. I salute the new officers led by President Michael Sy, for taking the lead role in addressing such very important issues such as care for the environment and product excellence. I am confident that realizing these goals will not be difficult if all of us do our own share.

Once again, congratulations and more power!

ALBERT LEE
President, 2001-2002

As the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers, Inc.(PAPM) celebrates its 41st Anniversary, it submits itself to a social commitment to help improve the lives of Filipinos by doing its share of safeguarding the environment for a better tomorrow.

Production Waste Management

This is the age of modern technology and PAPM brings into the industry new and significant innovations to produce products that are very safe to use and less toxic. The industry invests so much time, effort and resources in product development and research so that pollutants are reduced without suffering quality. Experts from abroad conduct periodic seminars to update their Filipino counterparts on modern ways of disposing waste. Recycling and recovery method of processing by-products result not only to the management of waste but also in substantial savings for the industry as cleaned solvents are re-used by paint manufacturers and other industries.

Consumer education is also a primary concern of the PAPM as it makes available information and product data, safeguards and techniques for the proper disposal of paints and other similar and related products.

Still part of its commitment to environmental care, PAPM has launched a campaign with all its member companies to be ISO 14000 certifiable. ISO, the International Organiza-tion for Standardization, is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies. ISO 14000 addresses the Environmental Management concern. It provides organizations with the elements of an effective environmental management system which can be integrated with other management requirements. Once ISO 14000 certified, a paint company may claim to be environmental and user friendly.

2002-2003 OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This is significant in the sense that the paint industry has already instituted their own system of environmental "reviews" and "audits" without any government regulation.

Responsible Care

The industry will soon undertake a comprehensive program for its member companies to institute a code of practice on safety and quality. This will check every facet of operation from management, personnel, finance, production, research and product development.

Projects and Activities

The paint industry continues to assist in projects where their products and services are needed. The association will continue to conduct seminars geared towards upgrading product quality and product knowledge, enhance linkages with government and civic organizations for possible assistance efforts and socials and fellowship to further strengthen the bonding among members.

Induction Rites

The new set of officers and board of directors will be inducted tonight at ceremonies to be held at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel. Guest speaker is Mr. Deogracias Vistan, CEO and President of Equitable-PCI Bank and former president of the Bankers Association of the Philippines Inducting officer is Mr. Enrique Lagdameo, PAPM president in 1967 & 1971.

CONGRATULATIONS
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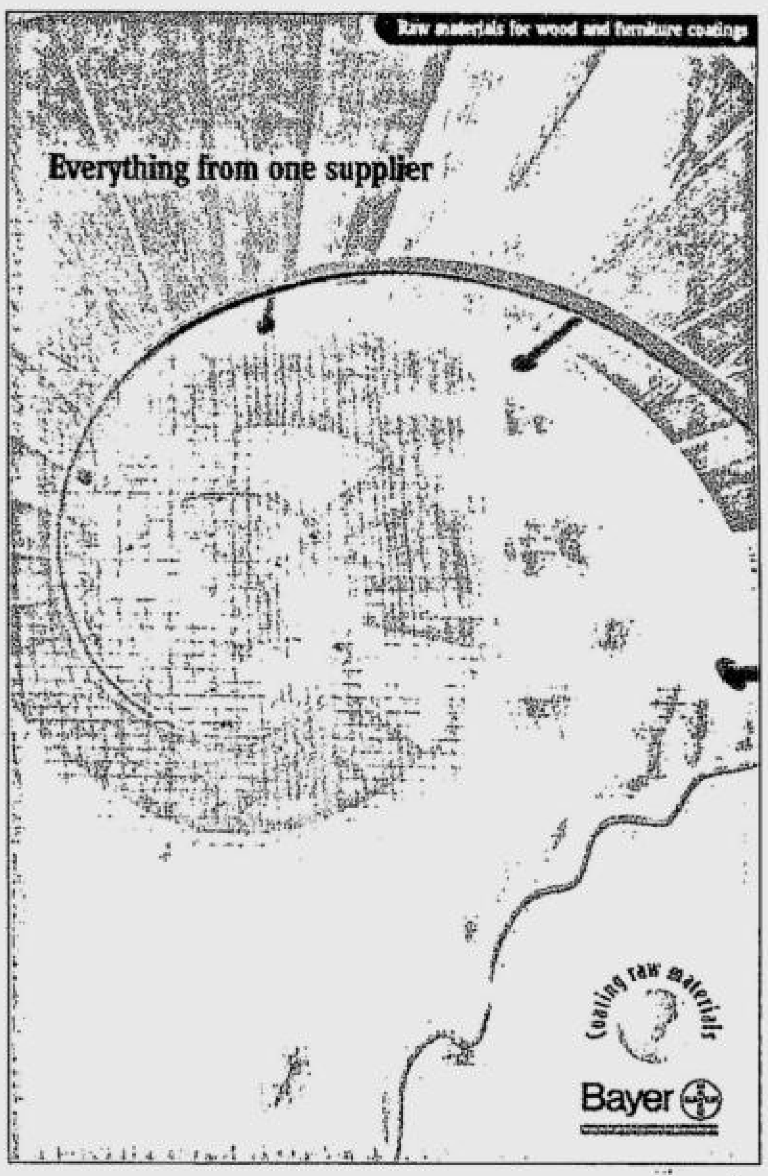

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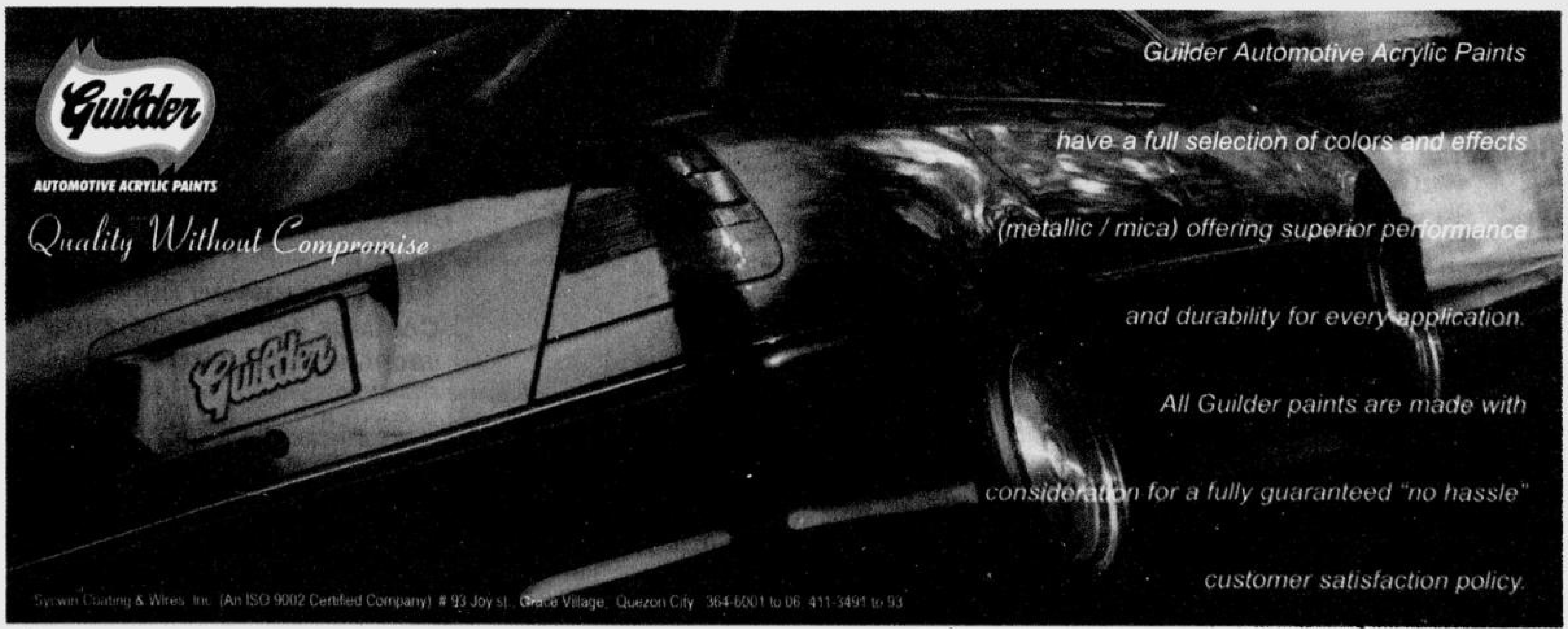

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- **PAPM 40TH Anniversary & the Inaugural**
- **Seminars**
  - Basic Paint Technology
  - Advance Coating Seminars
  - Exporting
  - Responsible Care
- **Creation of the PAPM website**
  www:papm-paints.org
- **Socio-Cultural**
  - Pinta Sa Kalikasan
  - Palarong PAPMilenyo
  - Bingo Night
  - Golf Tournament
  - Mid-Autumn Mooncake Festival
  - Christmas Party
- **PAPM Charter Change**
- **Election of 2002-2003 Officers & Board**

Merit Awardees

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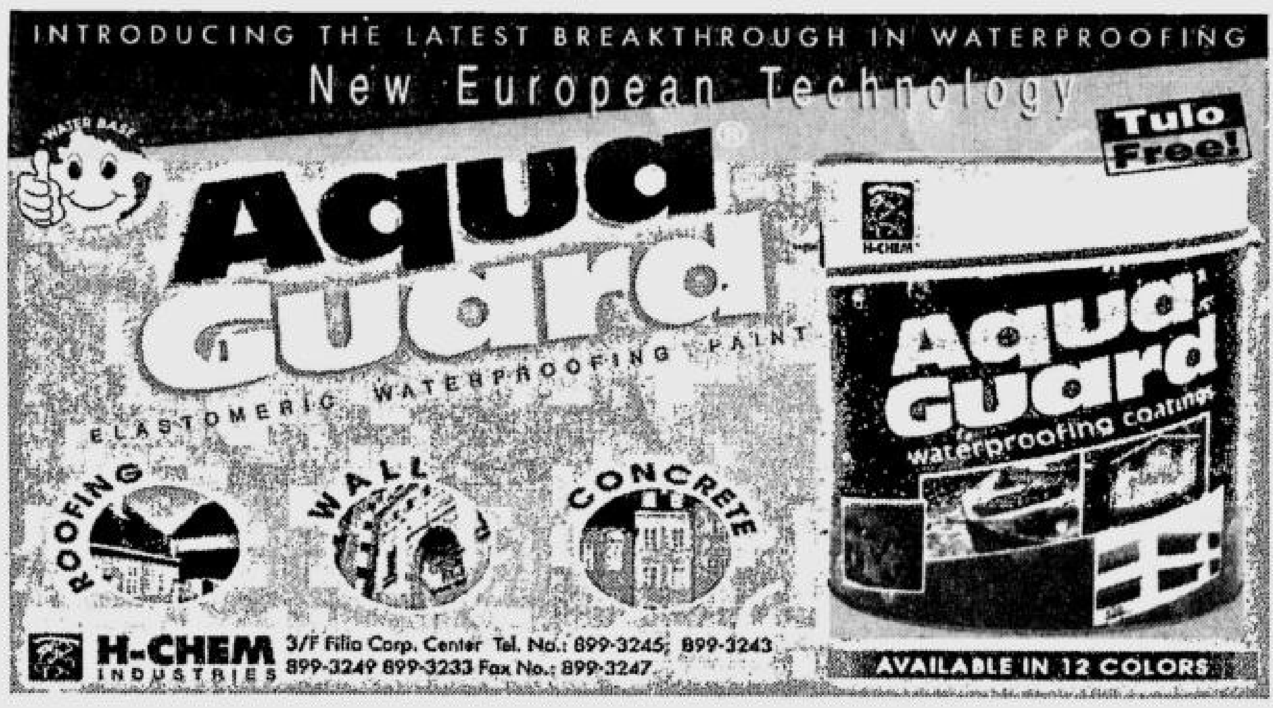
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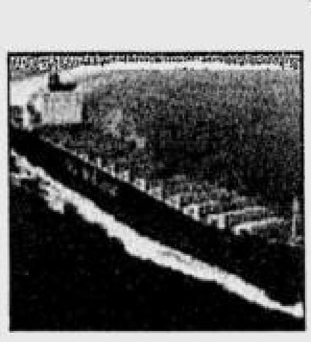

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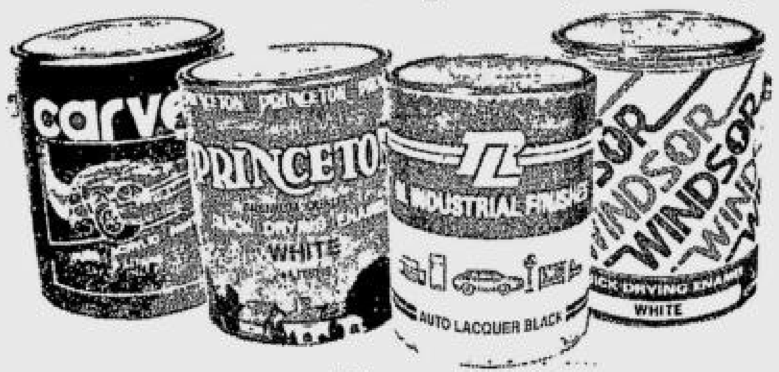

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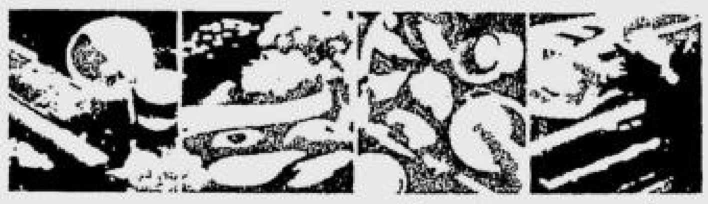

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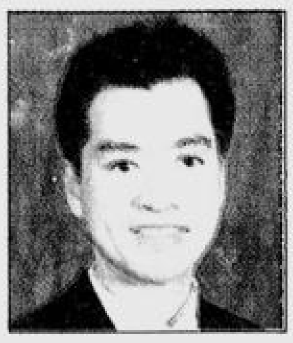

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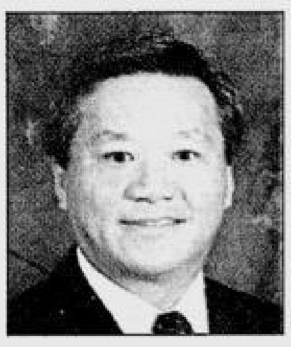

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2002 PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

FEBRUARY	• PRESENTATION OF 2002 ACTION PLAN • PARTICIPATION IN EXPO-KIMIKA EXHIBIT
APRIL	• SPORTSFEST • GMM-TOPIC: COATING CARE
JUNE	• GMM-TOPIC: ECONOMIC UP DATE
AUGUST	• BINGO NIGHT
SEPTEMBER	• MOONCAKE FESTIVAL
OCTOBER	• GMM-TOPIC: MARKET UPDATE • GOLF TOURNAMENT
NOVEMBER	• GMM-TOPIC: WASTE MANAGEMENT
DECEMBER	• CHRISTMAS PARTY

GMA wins support for RP-US war games

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 2

Internet gets Pope's imprimatur

VATICAN CITY—The Internet has a new convert, and it is no less than the head of the Roman Catholic Church himself.

Pope John Paul II on Tuesday officially embraced the Internet, urging the Roman Catholic Church to navigate the Web with evangelizing zeal "armed with the Gospel of Christ."

"For the Church, the new world of cyberspace is a summons to the great adventure of using its

INTERNET/ A12

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2002 ★ 38 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.17 NO. 47 ₱15

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Kidnapped engineer rescued** NEWS / A2
- **House to kick out Jalosjos** NEWS / A3
- **8 Abus slain in Basilan** NEWS / A2
- **Revival of Lacson case seen** NEWS / A2

Guingona bows to Macapagal on American forces

BY DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN AND CHRISTINE HERRERA

IN the end, Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. bowed to the will of the majority—and the ruling party—on the deployment of US troops in the Philippines.

An earlier anguished Guingona did not resign in protest, as some quarters had expected. But he washed his hands of the prickly matter of the RP-US war exercise "Balikatan 02-1," saying: "Regardless of any feeling that I have, we have to respect the official stand of the Department of Justice . . . that the President can decide on this issue."

Guingona spoke with reporters after the two-hour meeting of the National Security Council (NSC) that President Macapagal-Arroyo convened in Malacañang yesterday.

GUINGONA/ A13

"SO BE it," says Vice President Teofisto Guingona who resumes his seat of honor by the President's side on Wednesday at the National Security Council meeting also attended by former President Cory Aquino.

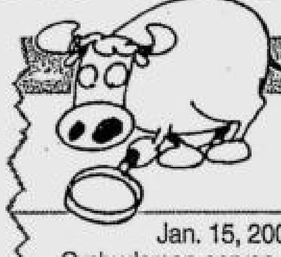
EDWIN BACASMAS

OMBUDSCAM

Ani accused of whitewashing ₱5.3-B tax credit fraud

DESIERTO'S MYSTERIOUS SWITCHEROO

Contrary to agreements he entered into with the Special Presidential Task Force 156, the Ombudsman has started preliminary investigation on a consolidated plunder case involving the tax credit scam. According to Rep. Oscar Moreno, the new, fatally flawed case does NOT include Shell, Petron and Chingkoe company executives.



Oct. 6, 2001 Task Force 156 reactivated	Oct. to Nov. 2001 Meetings betweenTask Force and Ombudsman	Dec. 6, 2001. First complaint readied	Dec. 13, 2001 First complaint filed	Jan. 15, 2002 Ombudsman serves subpoenas on consolidated case
• Life extended by 2 years • Placed under DOF	Both parties agreed on: • Full coordination • Fact-finding c/o Task Force • Immediate preliminary investigation to follow upon filing of complaint • First cases will be vs. Chingkoes • No consolidated plunder case	• Complaint was the product of eight drafts • Vs. Chingkoes' Diamond Knitting and Shell Petron executives • Ombudsman called for presscon • Ombudsman cancels presscon	• Task Force filed complaint with Ombudsman with no fanfare	• Shell, Petron NOT included • Chingkoes NOT included • Vital witness compromised • Specter of double jeopardy raised

Since Dec. 13, no preliminary investigation on separate complaints has been conducted, no subpoena served

INQGRAPHIC: E.SAMBO/ ILLUSTRATION: A.RODRIGUEZ

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

A FORMER Estrada impeachment prosecutor yesterday accused Ombudsman Aniano Desierto yesterday of whitewashing the P5.3-billion tax credit scam by filing a fatally flawed consolidated plunder case "destined for dismissal by design."

In a privilege speech at the House of Representatives, Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno charged that Desierto had effectively "kissed" the "grandmother of all scams" goodbye by proceeding with a weak case that disregarded the findings of the reactivated inter-agency task force investigating the scam and the agreements he entered into with the group.

Contrary to agreement, Desierto this month began a preliminary investigation of a consolidated plunder case against the Chingkoe Group of Companies which did not name the Chingkoe spouses or the Shell and Petron executives involved in the elaborate fraud.

"Like a thief in the night, Ombudsman Desierto has proceeded with the preliminary investigation of a consolidated plunder case involving all the 12 Chingkoe companies, instead of the agreed 12 separate plunder cases," Moreno charged. According to Special Presidential Task Force 156, the Chingkoe group is responsible for P2.5 billion, or almost half, of the fraudulent tax certificates.

The effect of Desierto's action, Moreno explained, was to get the oil firm and Chingkoe executives off the hook, render the Task Force "inutile," and allow the principals in the scam to plead double jeopardy as a defense.

Moreno said Desierto had followed a similar tack in prosecuting the Estrada plunder cases. "It may be recalled that in the Erap plunder case, Desierto filed one plunder case and eight separate graft and criminal cases at the same time," Moreno said, only to recall the other cases one at a time and as a result cast the shadow of double jeopardy over the main plunder case.

Desierto met the charge with an

OMBUDSCAM/ A12

"THE GRANDMOTHER" of all scams—the P5.3-billion tax credit anomaly—is detailed in a privilege speech delivered by Rep. Oscar Moreno. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

US troops boost stock market

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE ARRIVAL of American troops in the country to help the military crush the Abu Sayyaf bandit group has boosted the stock market, which yesterday rose 3.1 percent on heavy buying by foreigners.

"As soon as the news came through that 50 United States personnel had arrived here, the index went up," DA Market Securities chair Nestor Aguila said.

An initial group of 50 American troops arrived in Zamboanga City in Mindanao earlier this week with up to 600 set to come for training and military exercises with Filipino soldiers.

"The market rally could be due to the entry of US Special Forces here. The market is discounting the resolution of the Abu Sayyaf problem," Securities Specialist president Francisco Villaroman said.

The main index closed at 1,317.39 points, the highest this year. The strong turnover of P1.06 billion, up from an average of P350 million since the start of the year, raised hopes that the market could sustain its gains and stay above 1,300 points, according to traders.

Brighter economic prospects this year also cheered foreign fund managers, who accounted for 71 percent of the turnover.

"The market is just anticipating a better economic picture this year than last year," said Harry Liu at Summit Securities Inc.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo has shown she can handle the economic situation and that she is trying to solve the problems at hand," Liu said.

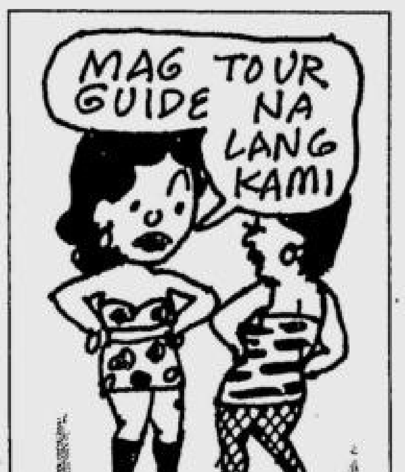
The central bank's decision to trim key interest rates has also forced many investors to take a second look at the equities market, analysts said.

"Interest rates are quite low and it seems that people are looking for some avenue where they can park their funds. In light of the bargain levels of almost all issues they took advantage of the share prices," said Manny Cruz of Mark Securities Corp.

Foreign investors have taken interest in the Philippines because of its weak performance since the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

Since December, foreign funds have been trickling back to the bourse, one of the world's worst

US/ A13


MAG TOUR GUIDE NA LANG KAMI

Good, clean fun for GIs bad news for bar girls

BY CARLITO PABLO

US TROOPS planning on rocking better think of other ways of spending their R&R.

President Macapagal-

GOOD/ A12

Macapagal wins bipartisan support for war games

No combat for Americans

BY CYNTHIA D. BALANA

AFTER being criticized for allowing RP-US war games to take place in a combat zone, the President yesterday started to win bipartisan support for the controversial military exercises after she categorically told the National Security Council that American troops would not be used in combat operations.

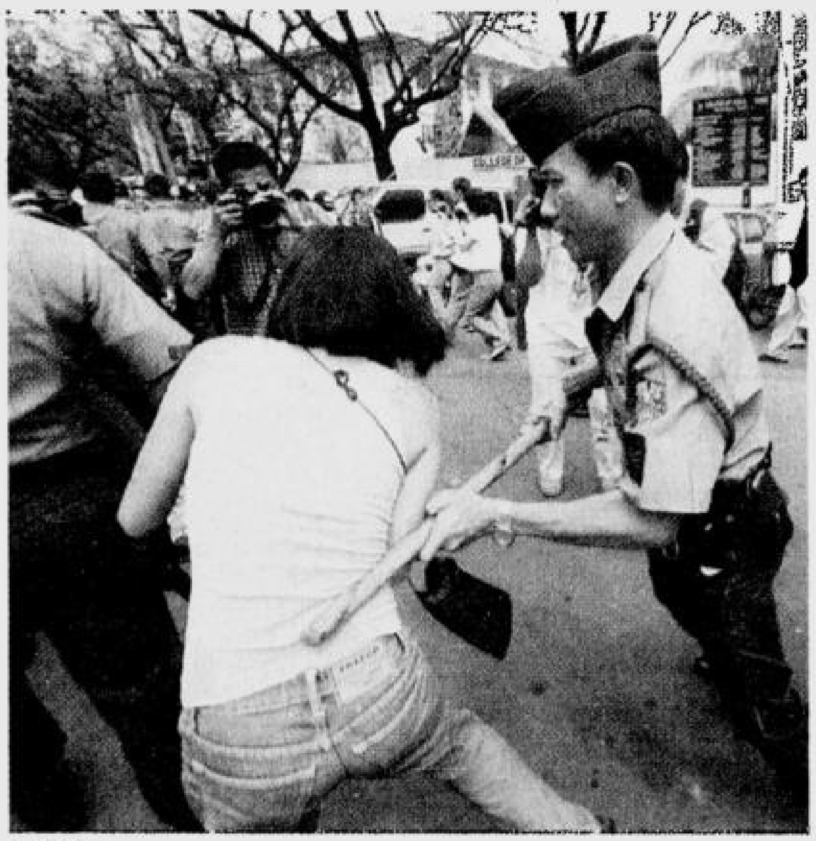
As a result, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and opposition Sen. Blas Ople, chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations, now support the exercises, Senate President Franklin Drilon told reporters.

Drilon said Ople, who criticized the combat-area war games the other day for violating the Visiting Forces Agreement, had no "strenuous objection," and Pimentel said some sectors were only raising "fine points in legalism."

President Macapagal-Arroyo told key officials that US troops would focus on extensive training of Filipino counterparts. "They will not engage in combat, period," National Security Adviser Roilo Golez added.

The President also gained solid Cabinet backing after Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., long

MACAPAGAL/ A12



OUCH

Riot police attack university students with clubs while they stage a rally at Gate 7 of Malacañang to protest the deployment of US troops in Basilan.

PNP spooks sure of Indon's links to terror group

BY TJ BURGONIO

POLICE intelligence officials yesterday insisted that an Indonesian arrested in Manila last week had links with an Asian-based terrorist group following denials by the suspect's father, a politician in East Java.

Director Robert Delfin, head of the national police Intelligence Group, said Singaporean authorities had positively identified Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi as a key leader of the Jemaah Islamiya.

Jemaah Islamiya is a terror group operating in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore and is suspected of having links with Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network. Thirteen members were recently arrested in Singapore, and police there said eight had received al-Qaida training in Afghanistan.

"How can he say that his son is

PNP/ A13

BUTI PA SYA NAKALIGTAS NA!

Comelec, Senate see answer to automation

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE SENATE and the Commission on Elections may have finally hit on the obvious solution to the problem of automating the counting and canvassing of votes in national elections.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, chair of the committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws and electoral reforms—which is drafting a poll modernization law—said the solution is to "acquire the best automated counting and canvassing machines and technology on a lease basis, which requires less money and will only be availed of as the need arises.

This, he said, would prevent the grim prospect of "the government (ending up) with billions of pesos worth of obsolete machines and outdated technologies."

Angara said leasing the automated machines would also free the Comelec from storage problems and worries the machines would be obsolete after one or two elections.

Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo, who attended the Senate hearing on poll modernization on Tuesday, said leasing automated counting and canvassing machines would only cost P700 million per election. To purchase the same machines would cost roughly P2.2 billion, he said.

Angara said that leasing the machines was "eminently sound."

The senator, however, reminded Benipayo that any transaction to this effect should be "supplier-driven" to make sure the Comelec gets the best technology at competitive cost.

He also urged Comelec officials to treat poll modernization as a matter of great urgency.

He said Comelec officials should set aside their internal disputes in favor of the bigger task of modernizing elections.

The modernization program has two main thrusts: cleaning up the voters' list and automating the counting and canvass of votes.

Department of Agrarian Reform
Adjudication Board (DARAB)
Annex Bldg., DAR Central Office Cmpd., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that a Resolution in **DARAB Case No. 4721** (Reg. Case No. 00873-SNE-95) entitled **ANTONIO RAZON versus SPS. ARSENIO P. SANTOS, JR. and CYNTHIA VILLAR SANTOS** was promulgated by the DAR Adjudication Board, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City on July 16, 2001.

Counsels and parties to this case particularly **Antonio Razon** whose last known address was in **Mabini Extension, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija** are hereby advised to get a copy of the said decision from the DARAB Secretariat, DAR Adjudication Board, Diliman, Quezon City. After the lapse of thirty (30) days from the date of the posting of this notice, without any Petition for Review being filed; an Entry of Judgment shall be made and the decision to this case shall become final and executory.

January 14, 2002. Diliman, Quezon City

Acting Executive Director
DARAB Secretariat

January 17 & 24, 2002 -- Inquirer

Department of Agrarian Reform
Adjudication Board (DARAB)
Annex Bldg., DAR Central Office Cmpd., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that a Resolution in **DARAB Case No. 2296** (Reg. Case No. 245-P-90) entitled **APOSTOL ESGUERRA versus RODOLFO PINGOL** was promulgated by the DAR Adjudication Board, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City on December 1, 2000.

Counsels and parties to this case particularly **Rodolfo Pingol** whose last known address was in **San Vicente, Apalit, Pampanga** are hereby advised to get a copy of the said decision from the DARAB Secretariat, DAR Adjudication Board, Diliman, Quezon City. After the lapse of thirty (30) days from the date of the posting of this notice, without any Petition for Review being filed, an Entry of Judgment shall be made and the decision to this case shall become final and executory.

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Kidnapped engineer, not priest, rescued

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—A Filipino consultant of a British-funded engineering project in Mindanao was rescued yesterday 33 hours after alleged Moro rebels abducted him in Lanao del Sur.

Engineer Jimmy Macusi, 43, a consultant for a bridge-building project by the Mabay and Johnson firm in Lanao del Sur, was released and rescued by a combined police and military force in a forested area of Barangay Gadongan, Ganassi, Lanao del Sur.

Maj. Gen. Alfonso Dagudag, commander of the Army's 4th Infantry Division, said the kidnappers were "disgruntled members" of the rebel Moro National Liberation Front, and not Filipino workers of the project's contractor, as some wire reports said.

Macusi's release had led to confusion earlier when police wrongly announced over local radio that kidnapped Italian priest Fr. Giuseppe Pierantoni, who is being held by another rogue group of Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels in the same area, had been freed.

"What we have is engineer Jimmy Macusi, not Father Pierantoni," Senior Supt. Alex Bangkula, the provincial police chief of Cotabato City, told the Agence France Presse, clarifying the report.

Police command

The regional police command had said on local radio monitored in Cotabato City that the Italian priest had been recovered and was en route to Manila.

"The initial report we got was that they got Pierantoni," said police spokesperson Senior Supt. Omar Pnago Ali, acknowledging the mistake.

Pierantoni, who was abducted on Oct. 17 last year, had told Zamboanga del Sur Bishop Zacarias Jimenez that he hoped he could be released before his birthday. He turned 45 today.

Dagudag said the kidnappers had released Macusi as the rescue team started to close in on them.

Closing in

"When the kidnappers sensed that the troops were closing in on them, they panicked and scampered (away), leaving behind engineer Macusi, who ran toward the advancing rescue team," Dagudag told reporters during a press conference at the Camp Edilberto Evangelista here.

Dagudag clarified that none of the kidnappers worked for either Macusi or Mabay and Johnson.

It was earlier suspected that the contractor's Filipino workers had abducted Macusi over the company's failure to pay the wages of some of the workers.

"The company has nothing to do with the incident. This problem was created by (jailed former rebel leader Nur) Misuari because it was he who recruited these men as part of his security force for the SPCPD. He should be the one to pay their salaries," Dagudag said.

Three of the kidnappers were identified as Mamalu Sultan, Omar Tomara and a certain Payno.

Dagudag said the military was still in hot pursuit of the group.

Macusi, who hails from San Fernando City was abducted in Barangay Binisilan, Pagayawan, Lanao del Sur at about 5 p.m. last Monday.

He recounted that during the 33 hours that he was with his captors, they were always on the run and only stopped to eat, mostly crackers and rice. *Butch D. Enerio, PDI Mindanao Bureau, with a report from AFP*

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8 Abus slain in Basilan

EIGHT suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf were killed while a soldier was wounded in several clashes in Tuburan, Basilan, yesterday.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu said the clashes started at about 2:30 p.m. yesterday after an Army unit sent to check reports about the presence of armed men in the area encountered a number of Abu Sayyaf in Sinulatan, Tuburan, Basilan.

Asked if United States troops participating in joint military exercises in Mindanao had been involved in the firefights, Cimatu said he did not have the information.

The unit involved in the clashes was composed of soldiers from the 18th Infantry Battalion, 3rd and 7th Scout Ranger companies and from the Task Force Comet that has been assigned to rescue the three hostages still being held by the bandit group.

Several helicopter gunships were used to support the government troops.

Firefights were still being reported as of press time last night.

Several firearms were recovered from the Abu Sayyaf, Cimatu told defense reporters in Camp Aguinaldo. *Martin P. Marfil*

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2) February 9, 2002 - NEW CAKES, PASTRIES AND COOKIES - P2,500. Cooked Carrot Cake, Banana Cake, Peanut Butter, Coconut Cookies, Choco-Chip Cookies, Chocolate Nut, Hopia, Siopao. Free ingredients. Next schedule: March 9, 2002.
3) February 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD CAKE DECORATING - P7,500. New method of gumpaste, flowers, objects, marzipan, quilting, swags & ribbons, ribbon insertion, finest string works, lace pieces, fondant, chocolate fondant.
4) February 13, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT USING LACE MATS, ROLLING PIN, SWAGS & RIBBONS - P3,000.
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Revival of Lacson case seen

THE SUPREME Court en banc yesterday paved the way for the possible re-opening of the Kuratong Baleleng rubout case against Sen. Panfilo Lacson up for oral argument next week.

In a one-page resolution, the Supreme Court instructed government lawyers and Lacson's counsel to prepare to deliver their arguments for and against the re-opening of the case on Tuesday.

The Department of Justice raised its petition to re-open the Kuratong Baleleng rubout case to the High Tribunal after the Court of Appeals denied its petition last year.

"The Court of Appeals erred in denying our petition to re-open the case," Perez told reporters at the DOJ headquarters in Manila yesterday.

Perez said that Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo would argue the case for the government.

"I would want to argue the case myself but I would have to ask the President first for permission," the justice secretary said.

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House to kick out Jalosjos

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

HIS name was still called out at yesterday's House roll call, but before long the name "Romeo Jalosjos" will no longer be found on the roster of members of the 12th Congress.

After the Supreme Court affirmed last Tuesday the conviction of Jalosjos for the rape of a young girl in 1996, the House leadership has decided to delete his name from the roster without having to vote on his removal as representative of the first district of Zamboanga del Norte.

House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II said the majority has decided that as soon as the House gets the copy of the SC decision, Jalosjos' name would be automatically deleted "without need of any committee or floor action."

'Painful decision'

Speaker Jose de Venecia said that could come as early as today.

"This is a painful decision because he was elected by the people but we have to respect the decision of the Supreme Court and follow the law because nobody is above the law," De Venecia said in a separate press conference.

De Venecia said he will ask Rep. Angeles Carloto of Zamboanga del Norte's third district to look after the residents of the first district.

"I will also invite the mayors and the non-government organizations so that together we can continue to provide the basic services and infrastructure needs of the district," De Venecia said.

A special election could be held to fill the vacancy but Congress would have to pass a law and approve a budget for it.

Gonzales said there was no need, as other House leaders have proposed, for the ethics committee to take action or for the members to vote for expulsion because the present House has no jurisdiction over the case.

This was because Jalosjos had committed the crime during the 10th Congress, Gonzales explained.

Jalosjos had won two more consecutive terms and was on his third and last term as congressman.

'Administrative removal'

Gonzales described the action of the 12th Congress as not an expulsion but "administrative removal" of Jalosjos' name from the roster.

He said the ethics committee of the 10th Congress already censured Jalosjos for the rape case and like in regular courts, he could not be subject to double jeopardy.

Gonzales said what the 12th Congress could implement is the "accessory penalty" that accompanies the penalty of *reclusion perpetua* imposed on Jalosjos by the courts. This is the penalty of perpetual and absolute disqualification from holding public office.

No more 'pork'

"That is the authority that will give us the power to delete his name from the roster of members," said Deputy Director Segundina Navarro of the House plenary affairs bureau.

"Deletion means he is no longer a member of the House. We will no longer read his name during the roll call and all his records would be removed," she said.

Despite Jalosjos' removal as congressman, the P65 million annual pork barrel allocations for his district should still be available to his constituents.

But Jalosjos would not be entitled to identify the projects to be funded.

Jalosjos still has an office at the House complex but it is left normally unoccupied. He has an office in his district that is staffed by an undetermined number of people.

Malaysia cracks down on Filipinos

KUALA LUMPUR—Hundreds of security personal raided an illegal workers' settlement in eastern Malaysia, destroying scores of houses and arresting at least 50 Filipinos, authorities and news reports said Wednesday.

More than 360 immigration and police officers, backed by helicopters and speedboats, cordoned off the tiny island of Gaya in Sabah state and began door-to-door checks of residents' identification and work papers, a government official said, on customary condition of anonymity.

The Malaysian government says thousands of Filipinos live in four villages on Gaya island after fleeing from a prolonged Muslim separatist insurgency in the southern Philippines.

Many of the immigrants live in dilapidated wooden huts and work as laborers on mainland Sabah, which lies on the northeastern tip of Borneo island and is linked to Mindanao by an archipelago.

About 600,000 Filipinos live in Sabah, which was once a hotbed of separatist support. Malaysia is a moderate, mostly Muslim country.

Malaysia has beefed up security along its border with the Philippines recently, following an upsurge in violence on Mindanao.

Philippine government forces put down a bloody revolt by one group of Muslim separatists in November, and are being assisted by US troops to destroy another group in the region, the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf. *AP*

No bail for 6 RP defendants in Kuwait trial

KUWAIT CITY—The trial of six Filipinos accused of last year's murder of Canadian Luc Ethier opened here Tuesday with three defense attorneys maintaining their clients' innocence and insisting on a lack of incriminating evidence.

The first hearing was mostly procedural as the court listened to the charges against the six defendants. The judge refused to grant them bail.

March 5 has been set as the date for the next court session.

Five of the defendants—Teddy Tomaro, Jimmy Binuya, Norasa Talib Esick, Lourdes Viray and Rosalia Tesoro Baclig—attended the first hearing.

Mary-Jane Bitos, who was Ethier's wife and the sixth defendant, is still in hospital recovering from the attack during which she was also shot three times. She is reportedly paralyzed from the waist down.

Ethier was shot dead as he walked with Bitos through a busy shopping area south of Kuwait City on Oct. 10.

Life insurance

In November, the emirate's interior ministry arrested seven Filipinos, including Edgar Robea who has since been released, claiming the group had planned to share Ethier's life insurance money.

According to court documents, Bitos, along with Binuya and Tomaro, are accused of premeditated murder while Esick is accused of providing the murder weapon, a pistol that has still not been found.

Baclig is accused of informing Ethier's killers of his whereabouts on the night he was shot, and Viray faces charges of knowing that the crime took place but failing to inform authorities.

Tomaro and Binuya, handcuffed together, were seated behind bars in a packed courtroom while the three women, all veiled, were seated at the back of the room.

None of the defendants showed any emotion, except Binuya who flashed a smile each time his two-year-old nephew waved at him. *AFP*

CA confirms science, press secretaries

THE APPOINTMENT of Science and Technology Secretary Estrella Alabastro and Press Secretary Noel Cabrera were confirmed yesterday by the Commission on Appointments (CA) during its plenary session.

Also confirmed for a second four-year term as member of the Judicial and Bar Council was former Supreme Court Associate Justice Regino Hermosisima, representing retired SC justices.

The confirmation of Alabastro and Cabrera were based on the separate recommendations of the CA committee on government corporations and other offices and the CA committee on science and technology, both chaired by Rep. Rodolfo Albano.

The commission still has to confirm the appointments of several other Cabinet members, including Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, Transportation and Communications Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez and Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez.

Lawyers back Gloria

THE PHILIPPINE Bar Association has expressed its full support for the economic programs of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a press statement, the PBA through its president, Judge Federico Alikpala Jr., encouraged all sectors of society to give their support for the success of the Macapagal administration's objective.

"It is a program that attacks the problems on a simple premise: We must raise the standard of living of those who are worst off," the statement said.

Alikpala was referring to the National Economic Summit held last month where the President outlined her administration's economic goals.

The PBA statement also said that the path to economic growth is paved with the rule of law. Rules laid down by law form the foundation for a just economic system, it said.

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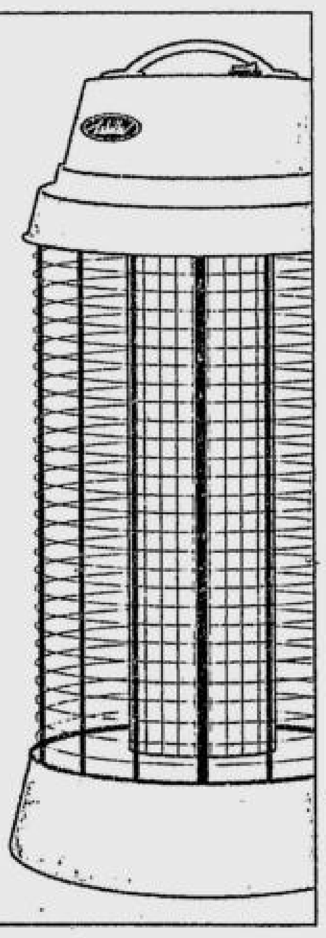

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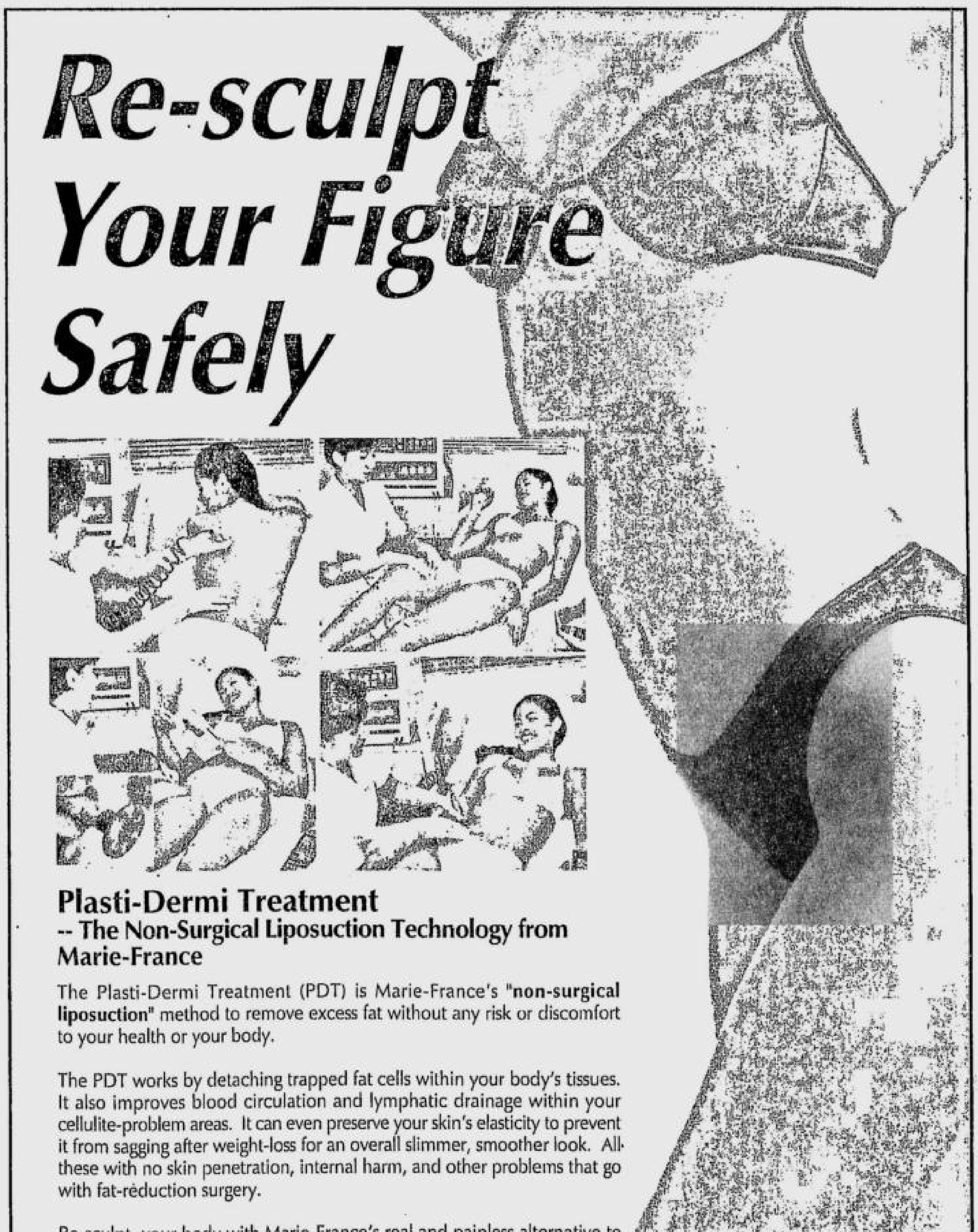

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Retired presidents

EDITORIAL

FORMER PRESIDENTS, like other retired people, face the problem of what to do with themselves after serving out their terms.

In the United States, ex-presidents either write memoirs (which is a good thing), sort out their papers and build up their libraries, take a trade (as President Jimmy Carter, who makes furniture), or go back to the ranch (as Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Ronald Reagan did). But everyone drops out of sight completely, and rarely come out in public except to attend state functions to which they are invited by the sitting president at the White House. They leave the center stage to the incumbent, and seldom offer advice unless it is sought. In the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, President Bill Clinton, now a New Yorker, showed up in New York as a spectator of the carnage, but he didn't steal the show from President George W. Bush or Mayor Rudy Giuliani. In fact, Clinton backed Bush's policy on terrorism.

The above describes briefly American political tradition. Ex-presidents, because of their unique political experience, hold a treasure trove of insights which sometimes find their way into books. In the Philippines, where former officials hardly write memoirs, no tradition governs the conduct of ex-presidents.

Among our living presidents, Ms Corazon Aquino reappears in public to rouse people behind her favorite causes (i.e., People Power movements) during a political crisis. Ex-President Joseph Estrada is engaged in a life-and-death legal battle and hardly has any time for anything else. Besides, he has been inhibited from engaging in any political activity.

Ex-President Fidel Ramos has his own ideas of political activism after his presidency. Vigorous and fit at 73, he can't leash his energy. He believes he can still stand as president; he is restless, and offers gratuitous advice and criticism. His interventions in public affairs have irritated both Estrada, to whom he once issued an ultimatum to shape up or quit during a meeting of the National Security Council, and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

He calls himself the country's "coup expert," and on this basis he offers unsolicited advice to President Macapagal not to worry about coup plots.

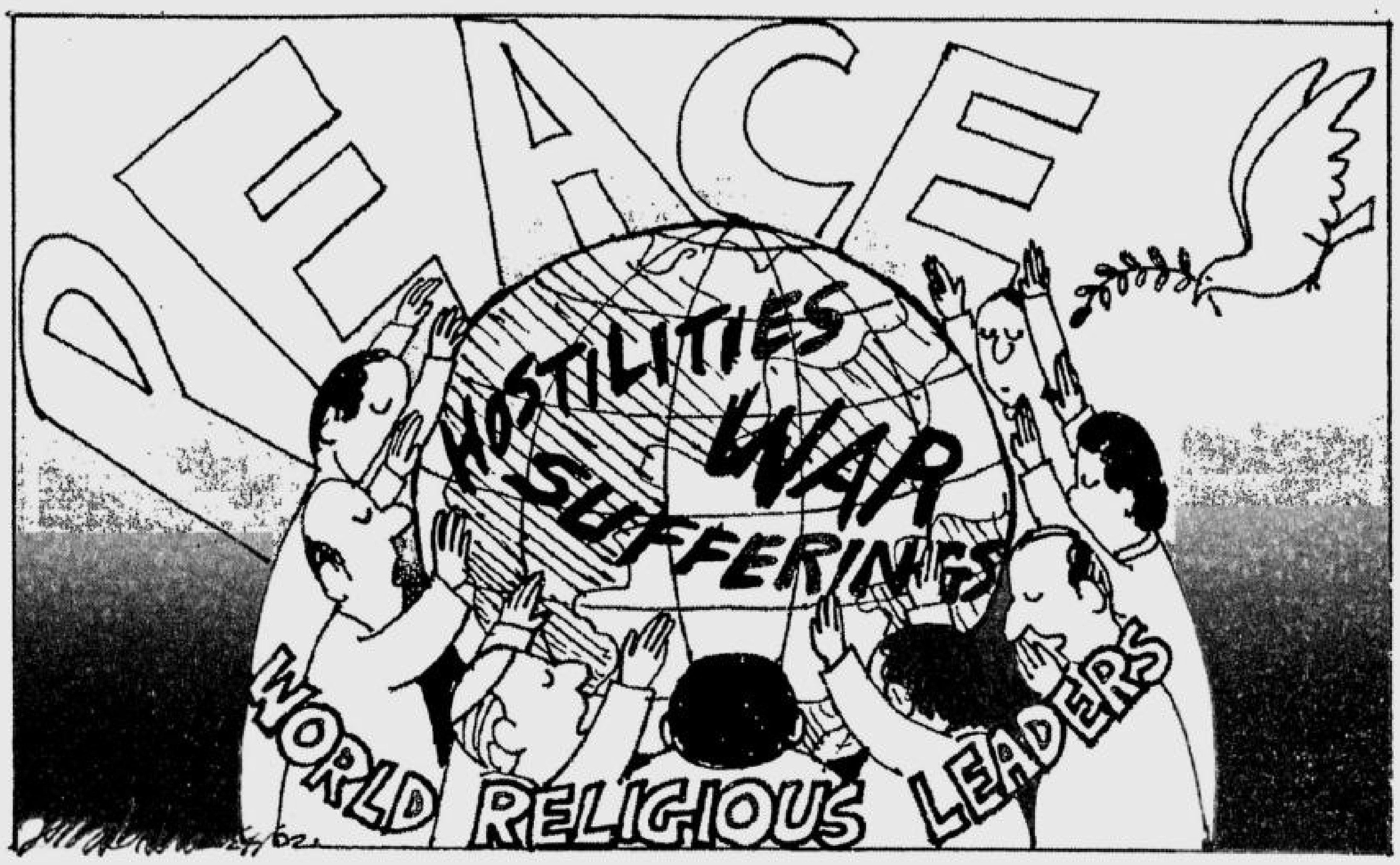
The problem is that the President is not quite sure where she stands vis-à-vis Ramos. Many times, he has criticized her, telling her to focus on the economy and forget about 2004. Although he has been named by the President as a special envoy to help sell the country to foreign investors, Ramos keeps a high profile in domestic politics. He loves traveling and enjoys his special designation, given that he is still well regarded in the international community owing to his impressive record in transforming the economy into near tiger status during his watch.

Ramos is chafing at the little influence he wields in the Macapagal administration. It is obvious he wants to play kingmaker as founder of Lakas-NUCD and its president emeritus and has hinted that Ms Macapagal needs the party machine in 2004. His flirtation with the idea of running again for president in 2004 annoys Ms Macapagal and has created tensions in their otherwise cooperative relationship.

Living Filipino ex-presidents have a venue for participation in statecraft: the Council of State, composed of incumbent executive, legislative, political leaders and elder statesmen. But the council has been moribund. For an ex-president, the danger of keeping a high profile is that in trying to steal the limelight he can easily turn into a public nuisance.

Ramos wants to wear many hats. He derives inspiration from the fact that Konrad Adenauer was West Germany's chancellor at age 80, and Charles de Gaulle rode back to power from his first retirement in his 70s. These are rare cases, and even these two leaders didn't do too well in their last years in office. Adenauer had to be bodily lifted out of the chancellery because age had impaired his mobility, and De Gaulle retired when he lost a referendum even though his term had not yet ended.

De Gaulle knew when to retire. Ramos does not know when he should stay in the background and avoid competing for attention with incumbent leaders. Being the old general that he is, he should just fade away.



NVM Gonzalez Foundation art raffle set Saturday

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE ART raffle for the benefit of the NVM Gonzalez Foundation will be held this Saturday, Jan. 26, starting at 5 p.m., at the Vargas Museum on the Diliman campus of the University of the Philippines. More than 100 works of art will be raffled to ticket holders. Each ticket holder will go home with a work of art. It can be an oil painting, a watercolor, a sculpture, a drawing in pastel, pen-and-ink, pencil or charcoal, a serigraph, a print, a ceramic, a cartoon, or a photograph. Just enough tickets, equal to the number of donated artworks, have been sold.

Donor artists are among the most outstanding in the Philippines. Some of them donated two or three pieces. National Artist Arturo Luz donated three. So did Malang. His two artist sons, Steve and Soler, and daughter-in-law Mona Santos donated two each.

Manny Baldemor, Fernando Sena and Joe Patinio also donated three each. E. Aguilar Cruz, Angelito Antonio, June Dalisay and Inna Vitasa gave two each.

Anita Magsaysay-Ho, Araceli Dans, Danny Dalena, Bencab, Claude Tayag, James Ong Lepho, Al Perez, Allan and Ivi Cosio, and Raul and Rowena Bancod have one each. Solomon Saprid, Eduardo Castrillo and Jerry Araos also have one each.

Here are the rest of the donor artists, a veritable Who's Who in the Philippine art world, arranged in no particular order:

Elmer Borlongan, Edgar Santiago, Songcayawon, Jaime Medina, Jason Moss, Franklin Cana, Philip Badon, John Vicaldo, Lynden Garcia, Alfredo Roces, Francisco Verano, Stella Berger, Ludy Gonzales, Joven Javier, Glenn Palaganas, Rex Santiago, Antipas Delotavo, Lydia Velasco, Ferdie Montemayor, Antonio Leano, Erwin Leano, Andy Orencio, Riel Hilario, Joey Mendoza, Pep Manalang, Roberto Feleo, Linelle Abueva, Noel Soriano, Dalena Girls, Magoo Valencia.

Gilda Cordero-Fernando, Andres Cristobal Cruz, Tino Dauz, Rony Diaz, Lily Amansec, Larry Francia.

Nonoy Marcelo, Boy Togonon, Roni Santiago, Milambiling, Romy Buen, Alex Young, Tonton Young, Wico, Bonnie Pertierra, MF, Jun Aquino, Norman Isaac, Nick Pertierra, AG, Egai Fernandez and Sonny Yabao.

Those who reserved tickets (price is P5,000 each) should pay and get them at Aklat-Laruan, FBR Arcade, 2nd Floor, 317 Katipunan Avenue (beside the Bobby Novenario shop in front of the Ateneo). The place is open until 10 p.m. For more information, you can call Tel. No. 435-4573.

Proceeds from the raffle will go to the NVM Gonzalez Foundation and will be used as prizes for the winners in the annual NVM Gonzalez short story contest and for the publication of their stories in book form.

* * *

We got a lot of feedback from readers on our columns on animal rights and the pet overpopulation. It is heartening to note that so many people do care for animals and wish they are treated more humanely by humans. From the welter of faxed, letters, e-mail, text messages and phone calls, I chose that of Karen Dawn of Pacific Palisades, California, founder of the Dawn Animal World News/Media Watch, because it is more informative. Dawn clarified two points in the spaying and neutering of stray dogs and cats in the United States.

She said that not all states in the United States require that all dogs be spayed/neutered before adoption from shelters. Only some states have that law. But thankfully, California and New York, the two biggest, do.

She also said that "the spay-and-release feral cat programs do more than just stopping those cats from reproducing. We have found that if cats are not returned, then other cats, unspayed, simply move into the territory. However, if you put the spayed cat back immediately in her territory, it remains hers and no other cats move in there and reproduce. Thus spay-and-release is more effective to reducing cat populations than spay-and-adopt. Also it can take years for a feral cat to ever become a good pet."

Thank you, Ms Dawn, for the information.

* * *

A Manila councilor and animal lovers are currently fighting over dogs. Councilor Julio Logarta of the sixth district has filed an ordinance directing owners of "stray, noisy, deformed and unfriendly dogs in Manila to either remove or kill the canines." A petition signed by at least five members of different households can declare a dog of a neighbor "a nuisance" and he must get rid of it within three days. If he doesn't, barangay officials would be authorized to seize the dog and "terminate it with extreme prejudice"—meaning kill it.

Logarta also suggested that ownership of dogs be limited to only two per family and that all dogs be registered and issued licenses and dog tags.

Animal lovers howled "foul" at the councilor's proposed ordinance.

The proposal has good and very bad points. The overpopulation of stray dogs is really getting out of hand. Registering, licensing and tagging all dogs may be one way to control it. But limiting ownership to only two dogs and killing "stray, noisy, deformed and unfriendly dogs" on mere petition of five neighbors is too much. And sending in the barangay Gestapo to march in and seize your dog to be terminated smacks of Hitler's Nazi Germany.

Dogs become strays, noisy, deformed and unfriendly because of irresponsible owners. But Logarta wants to punish the dogs—in fact, kill them—not the owners. Unfair.

The answer is not to limit ownership (many families have more than two dogs because they adopt strays and unwanted canines) but to educate owners to be more responsible. Irresponsible ones shouldn't be allowed to keep even one dog, but responsible owners should be allowed to keep as many dogs as they can reasonably afford and manage. What should be limited, or controlled, is the breeding of dogs and cats because it is this that causes the overpopulation of unwanted litters.

Myths

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

ITS very title clearly indicates what it's all about. "President Joseph 'Erap' Estrada: Ama ng Masa:" It's a huge exercise in mythmaking, both in the "street" sense of myth as a falsification of reality, and in its strict sense as a symbolic representation of reality, or a way of explaining how things came to pass.

It's a video CD I got in my mail last Christmas. The video is almost an hour long and is narrated by Jay Sonza. It reminded me of the propaganda material routinely put out by the martial law government, particularly the ones that also sought to depict Marcos in larger-than-life terms, or as a figure beloved by his people. But with a difference.

The video begins by showing Erap as the victim of a mugging, or more prosaically of a conspiracy by the rich and powerful. People who were driven to it by having something to gain or hide, or both. The plot was set in motion by someone with the worst of credentials: Chavit Singson, a crook whom his constituents had been rallying against, and who did not want gambling legalized because he would have lost his own *jueteng* racket in Ilocos Sur.

Without presenting real proof of wrongdoing, and without convicting Erap, the video says—in an ironic reversal of roles, it indicts the trampling of law, the very thing Erap (and Lucio Tan) showed only contempt for—the conspirators managed to oust not just a duly elected president but the most popular one in the nation's history. The thousands that put him out of power at Edsa II, Erap would argue with simple arithmetic, does not represent the more than 10 million voters who put him in power a couple of years before. To prove Edsa II's lack of legitimacy, the video quotes foreign publications condemning Edsa II as "mob rule" and "rich people's power."

The rest of the video goes on to depict Erap's "*Kalbaryo*," from his arrest last year to his apparent continuing oppression today. Which the masses, to whom he is *ama*, protested loudly last year and which they continue to seethe over today.

The first thing that put me off in that video was the title itself. I am allergic to words like "*ama*" and "*ina*" when they are used for political purposes, suggesting as they do brazen paternalism. Which doesn't just thwart the spirit of democracy but treats the *masà* as *uto-uto*. Imelda also used to do that, putting on airs of being "*ina ng bayan*," an idea some idiotic organization tried to foist on the public as late as a couple of years ago by giving her the "Ulirang Ina Award." My friend, Gerry Kaimo of PLDT.com fame, had the perfect riposte to that when he headlined an issue of his online offering: "*Ulirang ina mo.*" A similar sentiment swept me too upon seeing the title of the video: "*Masang ama mo.*"

But I don't know that everyone who watches the video will share that sentiment. Which is where its difference with the martial law propaganda material comes in, and which is the very big rub here. Marcos was never a charismatic figure, nor a popular one at least after martial law. Neither was Imelda, though she won Filipino hearts, if not minds, with song during her husband's sorties in the 1960s. But Erap remains so, and this video quite frighteningly proves it.

He may not have been a good actor on the silver screen but he is a good actor in real life, or in politics, which tends to be the same thing in this country. To say that he has "people skills" is a huge understatement. He cuts a sympathetic figure, particularly in scenes where he congregates with the masses. There is something very personal there, real or feigned, which is unlike President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's own efforts to be chummy with the poor. It's the eyes that do the trick. He knows how to play up to the camera, his eyes engaging the viewer in a one-on-one relationship.

When I wrote that column the other week saying I had no doubt Erap would win an electoral fight against Ms Macapagal if he should find a way to run again, I hadn't yet seen this video. This reinforces it. Edsa II notwithstanding, which as early as the elections last year already showed it had lost a great deal of its luster barely four months after it happened. In its video CD form of course, this material should reach only the middle class, and at most lower middle class, which can afford video CD players. But I doubt it—and subsequent forms of propaganda from that camp—will long be confined to that audience.

You can't stop it, of course, without abridging freedom of expression. And even if you could, it would be counterproductive. Ms Macapagal should know that most of all. Her father lost the election to Marcos in 1965 after he tried to ban the showing of "Iginuhit ng Tadhana," Marcos' own monumental effort at mythmaking—where he portrayed himself as having won more war medals than Audie Murphy, the American war hero turned movie star—which turned Marcos into the underdog and Macapagal into a bully. Quite apart from Ms Macapagal's political fortunes—and this country is so magic realist the probability of lighting striking twice in one place is not very remote—there is the future of the country to worry about if Erap should turn into the same thing. There would, truly, be the devil to pay.

All of which should drive home with even more ferocious urgency the point about giving deathly serious attention to the plight of the poor even as we speak. That cannot be done by rival mythmaking, or downright PR, such as by token donations to the cause of three impoverished children in Payatas. (And they had to bungle even that!) Or indeed by the more epic mythmaking that growth statistics and theories about the wonders of a *bukaka* economy represent. Who says only the poor are natural suckers for myths?

Marcos, or his lupus-filled spirit, didn't take too long to get back after the first people power. Is it so hard to imagine Erap, or his uric-acid-filled body, coming back to haunt more swiftly after the second one?

Be very, very afraid.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

Guingona can best serve by staying put

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

OVER THE PAST few days since he publicly admitted to "agonizing" over the heightened presence here of US military forces, Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona may be likened to those characters in the Middle Ages who were being quartered. This was the most popular form of torture and it involved having a man's extremities pulled by four wagons until he was ripped apart. Some people have been telling the Vice President to resign from the Cabinet, appealing to his long track record of nationalism. Among the most vociferous are leaders of the Left who want to use him as a rallying figure against the *Kano* and the administration. On the other hand, some DFA officials would be happy to see him go after so many months of trying to portray Guingona, for reasons of their own, as a bumbling fool by withholding crucial information from him and marginalizing him. Then there are American interests here which would doubtless be served by his exit.

* * *

It is well that the Vice President didn't fall for the trap and decided to stay on the job and help the President. Obviously he is aware of all these vested interests and he does not want to be used by anyone. The good thing about him is that he seems to have no personal agenda and he is ready to help GMA in every way he can.

Earlier I argued that in these volatile times the two top officials should stay united. The cacophony of voices, mostly with vested interests and selfish agenda, that we have heard in the past week on the issue of American involvement here is perhaps the best proof that Guingona's resignation would only have heightened political instability. By staying in the administration, he is in the best position to provide Ms Macapagal the needed "nationalist balance" inside the Cabinet. No better proof of this is there than the recent definition of the parameters of the American engagement after he began airing his anxieties about the unclear terms. Guingona can help balance the pro-American leanings of this administration and constructively play "devil's advocate" on nationalist issues. The President should realize that it's to her interest to keep this balance in dealing with the *Kano*, especially now that the administration is grimly determined to stop global terrorism by means fair or foul.

* * *

In a recent conversation with this columnist, Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez lamented some media members' distortion of the truth. He noted that it has often reported that he had been bypassed "repeatedly" by the Commission on Appointments, when the truth is that he has not yet appeared before the commission. I join my voice with those who are batting for Alvarez's confirmation. The guy is honest and hardworking and understands the crucial issues involved with the environment. Moreover, he was one of the key figures in the anti-Marcos movement in the United States, and he is not afraid of going against vested interests to protect the environment. Running the DENR is one of the toughest Cabinet jobs and Alvarez, with his long record on nationalistic issues, his experience as a former agrarian reform secretary and three-term legislator, and his long involvement with the environment, is highly qualified for the job.

* * *

Let's praise the business community for its determination to help the administration by coming up with concrete programs that are "doable," instead of just wringing its hands and blaming everyone except itself. For instance, I note yesterday's ad of the Consumer and Oil Price Watch headed by Raul Concepcion titled "A Time to Reflect," which appealed for a moratorium on "things that divide us" and urged everyone to focus on the "things that unite us." Business corporations have also vowed to focus on "doable" things in the next six months, as enunciated in commitments made by participants in the National Economic Summit last Dec. 10. Among these commitments are: to minimize layoffs of workers, to upgrade the training of Filipino workers in skills needed in this new technological century, and to strengthen the economy by actively campaigning to make people patronize RP-made products under the "Buy Pinoy Movement."

* * *

The businessmen's manifesto also stressed their willingness to help curb the problems bugging our society, such as smuggling, traffic and garbage. In a recent TV program on Channel 9 that I co-hosted with our INQUIRER colleague Conrad Banal, Joaquin Sy, secretary general of the 165-member strong Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce, pointed out that rampant smuggling of various goods has hurt many small and medium-sized Fil-Chinese corporations. No taxes or duties or bonded warehouse fees are paid for these smuggled goods. But Sy also stressed that "we businessmen have to police our ranks too." He pointed out that Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho has promised tougher measures against smuggling. Camacho is under tremendous pressure to match his resolve with deeds, as his Commission on Appointments confirmation may hinge on this problem.

* * *

I'd like to greet two brothers who have spent many years serving the nation in their chosen advocacies: twins Joe Concepcion, who has been deeply involved in policing the elections as president of Namfrel, and Ronnie Concepcion of Concepcion Industries, who has been active in nationalist consumer advocacies. The Concepcions, born three minutes apart (JoeCon was first), recently celebrated their 70th birthday at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati in a party arranged secretly by their children. A few hundred friends showed up to share in the brothers Concepcion's celebration of the biblical age. And as their kids (eight for Joe and Marivic Araneta-Concepcion and five for Ronnie and Menchu de las Alas-Concepcion) narrated in a videotape, the central message in their fathers' lives was the need for discipline, hard work, devotion to family and treating one's neighbor with justice and fairness.

On that occasion, Ronnie took pains to narrate to this column how he was "framed" by a media person who sought to portray him as highly critical of Ms Macapagal. He said the interview was quite long, but the published article zeroed in on one tiny portion that was taken entirely out of context. How can I be very critical when I rated GMA's performance as 8 on a scale of 10? he asked me with a pained look.

Of strikes and talents

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SINCE Jan. 14, workers at the Nestlé factory in Cabuyao, Laguna, have been on strike, arguing that negotiations for a collective bargaining agreement had been deadlocked.

What was the sticking point? According to the workers, it was management's refusal to include the retirement plan in the negotiations. In an ad it put out on Jan. 18, the union said the real reason for the management's refusal was that the retirement funds had been "illegally invested," implying that top company officials had been profiting from it.

Labor Secretary Pat Sto. Tomas has since taken jurisdiction over the labor dispute, upon Nestlé's contention that the work disruption at the Cabuyao plant might affect the supply of infant milk in the local market, as well as the company's export commitments, since the plant is an "Asean Supply Center" for infant milk. It also manufactures other milk products like Nido, Bear Brand, Milo, Nestlé Chocolait, Cerelac and others.

The DOLE issued a return to work order on Jan. 16, but in a radio interview the next day, the union president said they would defy this order. Nestlé authorities now say that not only do the factory gates remain closed, they have been welded together.

* * *

WHY does Nestlé Philippines refuse to include the retirement plan in the CBA negotiations? According to the company, the retirement plan applies to all employees regardless of rank and position. It is also "non-contributory," that is, the workers do not contribute any part of their salaries toward their retirement benefits.

The employees at the Cabuyao factory account for only 20 percent of the total workforce of Nestlé Philippines. In fact, the company deals with nine unions throughout all its plants and offices. It seems reasonable then when Nestlé argues that "no one bargaining unit can speak for the entire Nestlé workforce."

As for allegations that Nestlé officials have been "profiting" from the retirement funds, the company says the fund is actually managed by two banks, BPI and RCBC, which are responsible for investing the fund "for continuous growth and viability." The union's ad referred to the retirement fund's investment in Penpro Inc., which owns the land on which the various Nestlé factories stand, and on whose board sit Nestlé president Juan B. Santos and executives Marcelino Pineda and Mabini Antonio.

But how could Santos et al. be making money from Penpro when they hold just one share each in the company, the minimal requirement to sit on the board of directors? If I were working in Nestlé, I would in fact be grateful for their presence on the board, as it would ensure that my future retirement money would be in safe hands. After all, they, too, stand to benefit from a healthy fund performance.

* * *

WHEN Mel Tiangco and Jay Sonza left ABS-CBN some years back to join the network's archrival, GMA-7, they were initially prevented from appearing on Channel 7 by a suit filed by their former employer. In its argument, GMA-7 reasoned, through its lawyers, that "a contract to render personal service exclusively for one employer will not be indirectly enforced against another person" if, among others, "the injunction will leave the employee without other reasonable means of making a living."

Now the situation is reversed. After it was announced that Luchi Cruz-Valdes, who was previously employed by GMA-7 as production unit manager, was joining ABS-CBN as vice president for news, GMA-7 filed a suit against Valdes and obtained a temporary restraining order against her. The suit was based on the fact that Valdes had also signed a "talent agreement" with GMA-7 effective from August 2001 to August this year. The court granted the TRO against Valdes effective until August—in effect enforcing the contention of GMA-7 that the "talent agreement" is still valid. But this also means that Valdes will be forced to remain unemployed until August, if not longer.

If, as in the case of Mel and Jay, GMA-7 believed it was unjust for an injunction to "leave the employee without other reasonable means of making a living," why then is it making Valdes ineligible for employment by ABS-CBN or any other network for a full eight months?

It's my understanding that when Valdes informed her superior, Marisa Flores, that she was resigning, she made no mention of the "talent agreement," which covered her role as segment host of "Unang Hirit" and "I-Witness." This was because she was leaving it up to the GMA-7 management to decide if it wanted to terminate the agreement.

* * *

ASIDE FROM ORDERING her not to report for work, to go on terminal leave and surrender all company property, GMA-7 stopped giving Valdes any more assignments for "Unang Hirit" or "I-Witness" and stopped paying her talent fees as well.

This strikes me as effectively terminating the "talent agreement." If GMA-7 claims the agreement is still in force, then they should continue hiring Valdes as a talent and paying her talent fees, something they apparently refuse to do. But is an agreement binding only on one party and not on the other?

The television industry, like the rest of the media community, is said to be bracing for a harsh economic environment, what with the foreseen loss of advertising income. ABS-CBN, for one, has laid-off many talents already. Unknown to many viewers, the majority of television workers are "talents," that is, hired on temporary contracts that are usually renewed from month to month or year to year, but can be terminated at anytime. "Talents" are not just the glamorous faces before the cameras. They include camera operators, scriptwriters, directors, set designers, production assistants—the whole gamut of talent that makes TV shows possible.

How, if ever, the case of Luchi Cruz-Valdes and GMA-7 is finally resolved might well have an impact on thousands of workers in the beleaguered broadcasting field.

The eyes and yes of Fr. Louie H.

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

IF you have time and P160 (the latter is not absolutely necessary), come to the launching of "Church, Politics and Transformation," a book of essays by the late Redemptorist Fr. Luis G. Hechanova, which includes his mini-biography plus photos and illustrations. Also to be launched is the Fr. Louie G. Hechanova Foundation which was set up by his friends.

This will be held at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 26, the first anniversary of Father Louie's death. (He died suddenly the day after his 61st birthday.) The venue is the Titus Brandsma Center on 24 Acacia Drive, Quezon City.

Juan V. Sarmiento of the INQUIRER edited the book, Infanta Bishop Julio X. Labayen, OCD wrote the foreword, Marilen Abesamis wrote the accompanying biography. I did the short intro. But a horde of others helped make this possible.

So, by what authority are we doing this? Or, in Pinoyspeak, *ano ang K*?

Nobody has given us the mandate to go forth and, in Father Louie's name, build a foundation that would humbly (because in a small way) help the poor or publish a book. Not the Church hierarchy, not his religious congregation (which he headed at the time of his death), not his immediate family. (His older brother Fenny who died in 1967 was considered the "whiz kid" in the Macapagal Cabinet.)

But we, his friends, are doing just that. And we presume there would be no objections, only overwhelming approval.

Is this for him? Is this something to simply remember him by? Is this to honor him?

None of the above. For if Father Louie knew these were the reasons, he would rise from the dead and ask, "Don't you have something better to do?" Not because we are not worthy of the task and therefore he would not want his name to be used in vain, but because he would not want to be the great cause for the great fuss.

But this we presume: he would not mind lending his name to a cause that is not about him but for the poor humble folk whom he loved and left behind. This we also presume: he would agree that there is no stopping those—us—who intend to get by with a little less in order to do a little more for the least, the lost, the excluded of this world.

And so we all agreed: sure, this is to remember Father Louie by, but this is really the greatest excuse for us to continue what we used to do as social action workers and church activists involved in a common cause. That "cause" was the context where many of us first encountered Fr. Luis G. Hechanova.

For too long, when we had all gone our separate ways after we worked at different times and under different circumstances at the National Secretariat of Social Action (NASSA), we often wondered where the collective fire had gone. We regularly met (for prayerful reflection and later, uh, beer) in order to keep the ties that bound us together. We recalled the good old days of militancy, with Father Louie often there to help stoke the fire or even share a few laughs.

But how we ached for those good old days. How we wished we could again find a way to bring the remaining sparks together in order to bring some warmth, some impact—small though it may be—on the lives of those whom we had not reached in the past.

Now that Father Louie has passed on, we realize the fire has not really died. It rages. There is, within each of us, a desire to be ever involved and connected with the *anawim*, the poor, the hungry, the wounded, the forgotten. And we have found a reason to pursue this.

Who are we? We are the friends of Father Louie, individuals who had known him and who appreciate the meaning of his life as a man of prayer, thinker, seeker, lover of justice and truth, priest for the people. We have all agreed that Father Louie's death should not be considered as a loss and an end, but a beginning.

And so we begin with this effort. This little book. A small pebble thrown into a pool which we hope will generate ripples.

The reflective pieces in this book are proof that Father Louie did not remain in the comfortable confines of convent and church. He plunged right into the smoldering arena where contending forces were at play—the Church and the State, the poor and the rich, labor and capital—while bringing into it the sharpness of his vision and the gentleness and simplicity of his spirit. He had a great sense of humor too which surfaced in his short, witty and moving pieces.

But Father Louie's longer written works displayed the seriousness and depth of one who was right at home in the world and yet not entirely of it. One of the long pieces he wrote a few months before he died came out in the INQUIRER ("Gambling: A Church-State Dilemma") when the issue of *jueteng* and then President Joseph Estrada's involvement hogged the headlines. The ones he wrote during the dark years of martial rule were feisty and daring, yet theologically apt, pushing the limits of the Church because the world is where the Church should be.

But some of his most reflective essays were the result of his own personal experiences among the poor ("Life in the hacienda: 'Is there a God?'") and of his quiet times in prayer. These became the solid ground on which his theologizing (on struggle and liberation) firmly stood.

As a priest and Filipino, Father Louie waded right into the heart of humanity groaning for redemption and saw that the Spirit was alive where there was prayer and action. Justice, peace, truth, freedom, happiness—these were not dreams but rights of the children of God.

Through his written works, Father Louie left behind his eyes—figuratively, so that we may catch a glimpse of what he saw. But in a literal and physical sense he also bequeathed those organs of seeing to those who once were blind and now can see.

This small compilation shows us how Father Louie saw our world, God's world. It reverberates with his eternal yes to love and humankind. To inspire us to move and act and love—a little more, until it hurts.

Sex and the single Pinay

YOUNGBLOOD

Ella Reyes

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

HERE'S my problem: I really want to have sex.

Okay, let me clarify: I'm a single, unattached Filipina who does not want or need a relationship right now. But I am honest enough to admit that I do have urges (yes, urges that the Catholic Church would rather completely ignore, much less indulge), but I am too scared to engage in casual sex out of fear not of eternal damnation but of eternal infection.

Since I can hear you out there already chomping at the bit, ready to remind me about how many people I'm offending, let me hasten to qualify my statements.

Firstly, I don't believe that all single Filipinas share my opinions. The single Pinay in the title refers to me, a single Pinay.

Secondly, I don't believe that sex is a bad, dirty thing that we shouldn't mention in polite or educated company. For some, it can be something approximating the sharing of souls. Ideally, it should be something shared by responsible and mature adults. In reality, some people think of it as an itch that has to be scratched. I fall somewhere between the last two categories. I think it's one of those healthy urges everyone has (yes, including women) but which should not be indulged unless one is: (a) psychologically, emotionally and physically healthy, and (b) responsible for the consequences.

Lastly, I am not advocating anything. Call this a letter of complaint or a letter-request, just don't call me an advocate. I'm not about to champion any cause because this is too personal and our society is just not ready for it. *Capisce*?

If I were into a fairly stable relationship, this would probably not be a problem. My partner would probably be more than willing to "help" me in my time of need. However, I have a healthy sex drive and a highly imaginative mind, which would probably send my boyfriend into paroxysms of ecstasy during the act but drive him into the depths of despondency over questions about my "appetite." He would probably wonder if I have a sickness (let's face it: although they fantasize about having one for a partner, no Pinoy would actually want a serious relationship with a possible "nymphomaniac"), which would be the first step toward the decline of our relationship. That would be the end of my sex life with this particular partner. Besides, all I really want is the sex, and none of the why-haven't-you-called-don't-you-love-me-anymore-why-aren't-you-more-like-my-mom questions that come with most relationships.

If I were into casual sex, again this would probably not be a problem. I don't think that a man would need several gallons of liquor poured down his throat in order to make him want to sleep with me (or so I tell myself). I have had offers—mostly from construction workers, I admit, but, hey, they've got fabulous bodies, what with all that lifting (which makes me think of the positions we could get into).

There are problems with this scenario though. One, I would require a complete physical examination of the man (yes, all the tests for sexually transmitted diseases), and I would prefer someone who's firing blanks, if you know what I mean, and double protection as well (condoms and the pill). Now, no one who's looking for truly casual sex would bother with all these niceties. They'd probably look for someone who's an easy, hmmm, partner.

Two, I'm not very good at handling awkward situations, i.e. after sex. Do we talk? Do we exchange phone numbers in case we need a convenient partner again? Do we cuddle? Maybe if someone would come up with an etiquette guide or something…

Lastly, I would want a written guarantee that I'd be getting good sex. Really good sex. Unfortunately, though a lot of men may talk the talk, very few of them can actually deliver the goods. So no, casual sex is out.

The easy solution to my dilemma is to hire a partner. Yes, one of those provided by "escort services." You see them everywhere (but under more polite names). But then they all cater to men.

Men who want a convenient woman—or even a convenient man—have no problems procuring such services. We accept and acknowledge that men have sex drives. We even look the other way when they indulge those sex drives so long as they're not forcing anyone or poaching on someone. But women? Ha!

Now the religious and some feminists must be preparing to challenge my ideas. Yes, this is base. But if you would be truly honest, we all have very basic instincts. It's just that we've had pounded into our superegos that sex is "dirty."

With regard to the moral question concerning prostitution, I lean more toward the position of some European countries where the practice is legal and safe. Take the moral high horse if you want, I prefer a different ride.

And yes, there are some who claim it will "lower" women to the levels of knuckle-dragging men. What, may I ask, is so demeaning about admitting that you have a sex drive? Why should people who claim to have my best interests at heart deprive me of that?

So my problem remains: I really want to have sex. I don't think it's a problem that will have a solution any time soon. But there are alternatives at hand—if you get my drift. But that should be the topic of another piece.

Ella Reyes, 27, is the pseudonym of a schoolteacher who is worried about being ostracized by her Catholic superiors for the views she has expressed in this piece.

THEY SAID

Temporary arrangement

"What if Gloria's no longer President? What would happen to my grandchild? At this point, it seems that his educational support is good for a year in the absence of a long-term agreement."

—Anacleta Banogan, guardian of "Sona boy" Jayson Banogan, on the child's schooling

Trading places

"I used to be the one paying these orphans a visit at their place which was near Malacañang. Now they are the ones coming to see me."

—Deposed President Joseph Estrada after orphans from the Damas de Filipinas paid a visit at the Veteran's Memorial Medical Center

Serene destination

"With the serenity of these places, they would be convinced the Philippines is more than just kidnappings and the Abu Sayyaf."

—Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon on British Airway's continuous support in promoting the Philippines as a major Asian destination

Respect

"We should respect and help one another instead of trying to put down each other. I wish all the producers good luck in the coming year."

—Regal Films owner Lily Monteverde smarting from what she described as an insult by actor Cesar Montano during the "Gabi ng Parangal" of the 2001 Metro Manila Film Festival

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Recognition for historic decisions

THE INQUIRER'S selection of the Justices of the Supreme Court as Filipino of the Year 2001 is much appreciated. I have often felt that too much credit has been given the chief justice as regards judicial matters when, in fact, the justices of the Court have given their fair share, if not more, in the administration of justice and the good governance of the country. Indeed, it was the justices of the Court together who rendered the decisions we now consider historic and crucial.

Due recognition must also be given the Filipino people who have exercised exceptional vigilance in their relationship with the government. The Supreme Court is a passive agency, and it can only act when its powers are invoked through a justiciable case filed before it. Thus, democracy is nowhere more manifest than in the workings of the Court, and again the justices must be commended for ably performing their role in this design.

Inasmuch as your selection has no doubt encouraged the justices, as well as the personnel, of the Supreme Court to further their efforts to serve the people through the administration of justice, I thank the INQUIRER.

Moreover, the article explaining the INQUIRER's choice has enlightened our people about the role of the judiciary in government. May the INQUIRER continue to consistently present fearless views to illumine the citizenry and challenge those in government to improve their services.—**HILARIO G. DAVIDE JR., chief justice, Supreme Court, Padre Faura Street, Manila**

Gov't to earn billions from Malampaya

WE wish to clarify the issues raised by Alberto F. del Pilar and Allan P.E. Tolentino in their letters on the Malampaya Natural Gas Project. (PDI, 12/28/01 and PDI, 1/2, 7/02)

Who will profit from the Malampaya project?

The allegation that the government does not receive a substantial share from the Malampaya gas revenue is unfounded. As early as 1972, the Department of Energy's predecessor, then called the Petroleum Board, drafted what later became Presidential Decree 87 or the Petroleum Act of 1972, to encourage exploration companies to invest in the country in the face of the government's lack of resources and inability to undertake large-scale exploration activities by itself. The decree enables the government to receive much-needed revenues from commercial discoveries which it would not otherwise have received were it not for the significant investment by service contractors of financial and technical resources and expertise into the country. In the same vein, the service contractor is allowed to recoup its investment in the exploration project and secure a profit for the risk and resource allocated for the same.

In the case of the Malampaya Project, which has estimated natural gas reserves of 2.7 trillion cubic feet, an estimated $19 billion in gross revenues will be generated over a 20-year period commencing this year. As the service contractor is allowed by law to recover from this amount all its duly validated operating expenses, the government will derive about $8 billion to $10 billion over this period. In addition, the government will realize another $7.8 billion in terms of electricity generation and foreign exchange and environmental savings resulting from the decreased reliance on imported fuels and the resulting cleaner air emissions.

It should be stressed that the government's 60-percent share of the net proceeds from the Malampaya gas production is separate and distinct from the dividends to be received by the government-owned PNOC Exploration Corp. on its 10-percent investment in the Malampaya Project.

Thus, contrary to what may have been reported in the past, the government stands to gain directly from its share of the net revenue and indirectly through the dividends to be received by the PNOC-EC consortium that also includes Shell and Texaco.

With respect to the allegedly belated drafting of rules governing the promotion by the government of the commercial uses of natural gas, allow me to clarify that since the promulgation of PD 87 in 1972, the DOE has issued numerous rules in the form of circulars governing the exploration and development, or the upstream side, of the gas industry.

Now that gas is actually flowing from the Malampaya gas field, there is a need to complement these upstream rules with the downstream rules, or rules which shall govern the transportation and delivery of gas from the processing facilities to various customers which may include power plants which will use natural gas as fuel, industrial and economic zones and consumers like you and me, who may someday use gas to make our vehicles run.

Given the lengthy gestation of and first-time experience in this new industry, the DOE has to temper the urgency to immediately issue these rules with the need to evaluate thoroughly the policy issues that accompany the formulation of the same. Moreover, since this is a new industry, we need to become relative experts within a very limited period of time. We are targeting the promulgation of these rules by March this year and are optimistic that we will be able to accomplish the same with much hard work and diligence.—**VINCENT S. PEREZ JR., secretary, Department of Energy, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila**

Fees used to help OFWs

I REFER to the news article titled, "RP's new heroes subjected to abuse," last Jan. 7.

I sincerely sympathize with the writer's daughter who was inconvenienced in the course of her return trip to the United States. But I would also like to explain the reasons behind it.

First, it is indeed true that any overseas Filipino worker has to seek a "POEA clearance" before leaving for his place of work. This is to assure that our countrymen are indeed leaving the country for legitimate reasons and that the necessary assistance will be extended to them at any given time. We have come across (and still do) several cases of illegal recruitment and illegal status of some of our countrymen abroad which expose them to harm and make them vulnerable.

We in government aim to comply with Philippine laws and regulations concerning our OFWs as issued and mandated by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa), promoting and protecting the welfare of our OFWs. I would like to assure the author, his daughter and the public that the fees collected from OFWs are used to help them in their time of need. I thank the daughter for dutifully paying the required dues to the POEA and the Owwa.

Incidentally, we have already assigned an Owwa collecting officer at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport departure area so that OFWs need not go anymore to the Duty Free Philippines to fulfill POEA and Owwa requirements. I welcome personal correspondence through my e-mail address: admin@owwa.gov.ph.—**WILHELM D. SORIANO, administrator, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Owwa Center, 7th Street cor. F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City**

LETTERS

No justification for indiscretion

WE wish to react to the news story of Donna Cueto titled, "Poster educational, says Roco" last Jan. 11.

We are of the view that the posters mentioned in the article, produced with the use of government funds, may be violative of Republic Act 6713, otherwise known as the "Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees." The law provides, among others, that: "Public officials and employees shall always uphold the public interest over and above personal interest. All government resources and powers of their respective offices must be employed and used efficiently, effectively, honestly and economically, particularly to avoid wastage in public funds and revenues." (Section 4).

It is the position of the Department of Education, according to the news item, that the posters are "educational" since they are intended to let the public know that former Sen. Raul Roco is the present secretary of education. We do not see what is so "educational" about this matter. Furthermore, if the real purpose of the posters were to educate the people about the DepEd, then not only the secretary but all the other ranking officials of the department should have been named and featured therein. The argument that personal interest is involved here is difficult to refute.

The DepEd has, according to the news item, attempted to justify the making of the posters by inviting attention to the purchase of a Ford Expedition by the former education secretary and expenditures of other departments. This is indeed deplorable.

A charge of abuse or indiscretion cannot be dismissed by the mere reference to or comparison with those committed by others. Besides, among all the agencies of the government, the DepEd, which is expected to be a role model for the young, should be the last one to indulge in any impropriety. As a matter of fact, under the Constitution, the educational system should "strengthen ethical and spiritual values" and "develop moral character and personal discipline." (Art. XIV, Sec. 3(4), Philippine Constitution)—**SAMSON S. ALCANTARA, president, Social Justice Society, Suite 1402, Manila Astral Tower, Taft Avenue cor. Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila**

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Holy days and holidays

BACK in grade school I learned there were holidays and holy days. Holidays were secular, stuff like Independence Day, then still celebrated on July 4. Holy days were, on the other hand, Catholic feast days and there were many.

In those less ecumenical days, we never heard of Hanukah or Ramadan, even if these feast days are celebrated by millions of people. In fact, we never even knew that other Christian churches, such as the Orthodox rites, celebrated Christmas on another day.

In the 21st century, despite continuing religious conflicts, people do try to be more conscious of each other's holy days and to send greetings on those important dates. But there's more to this than the ecumenical spirit: it's also useful to check on important holy days and holidays before fixing the dates for business trips, or a convention. If, for example, you want a long training seminar in Mindanao with Muslims, you should avoid the Ramadan because participants have to fast during the day. On the other hand, you might want to plan to visit a country to specifically catch some holy day. The Hindu Deepali or Festival of Lights, for example, is celebrated with much pageantry not just in India but also in neighboring Malaysia and Singapore.

Unfortunately, most of our calendars do not list non-Christian feasts. It's also difficult to keep track of many of these holidays because they are based on lunar calendars, which means the dates on our Gregorian solar calendar will change each year. Note that even the Christian Easter is a moveable lunar-based feast, which is why even Christians are at a loss when asked about Holy Week's dates. (It's March 25 to 31 this year, in case you're wondering.)

To help you for 2002, I've compiled some of the more important holidays and feasts in our part of the world, with their equivalent dates on our Gregorian solar calendar. Note that the same feasts may have different names depending on the language used: Muslim festivals in Malaysia are preceded by "Hari Raya" while in Arabic these are called "Eid" or "Id."

January is relatively quiet in most countries, almost as if people need to recover from December's revelries, an exception being the Philippines with its Mardi Gras festivities such as the Sinulog and Dinagyang.

Expect prolonged holidays around Feb. 12 in China, Taiwan and other countries that use the Chinese lunar calendar. Since this is the year of the horse, you can greet friends "*Madao chenggong*" (May you succeed quickly. There is a play of words here: "*ma*" means both "horse" and "immediately.") Lunar new year celebrations are a mixture of the religious and secular.

In Muslim areas, there will be celebrations around Feb. 23, which is the Eid-al-Adha (Hari Raya Haji in Malaysia) or Feast of the Sacrifice, marking the end of the Muslims' hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca. That's followed by the new year on the Islamic calendar, which falls this year on March 15. The new year marks the hijra or Mohammed's flight to Medina. In the Islamic calendar, this will be the year 1423. Muslim countries will mark the birthday of Mohammed on May 24.

The birth date of another founder of a great religion, Gautama Buddha, is celebrated on May 27, Wesak or Vesak Day. This is a holiday in many countries with Buddhist populations, from India (where it is called Buddha Purnima) to Indonesia.

Aug. 9 to Sept. 6 is the seventh month in the Chinese lunar calendar, when "hungry ghosts" or restless spirits of the dead are said to roam the earth, causing havoc and disaster. Many Chinese are reluctant to initiate new ventures this inauspicious month, whether in the form of new business, a marriage, or even moving into a new home.

Sept. 7 to 8 is Rosh Hashanah, the beginning of the Jewish New Year. It is a time for judgment during which God judges humanity for their deeds in the past year. The first 10 days of the new year are therefore a time for repentance, culminating with fasting on Yom Kippur (this year. Sept. 15 to 16).

Sept. 23, the 15th day of the eighth lunar month, is the Chinese mid-autumn festival and moon cakes. Originally, this was to mark an uprising against the Mongolians, but these days, the festival is simply a time for revelry. In Korea, a Harvest Moon Festival is celebrated from Sept. 20 to 22.

Nov. 5 is the Hindu Dewali or Deepvali, the Festival of the Lights celebrating Krishna's victory over the demon Naraka.

Nov. 5 to Dec. 4 is the month of Ramadan, the Muslims' month of fasting, reflection and prayer. There may be a day's variation for the dates depending on when the new moon is seen.

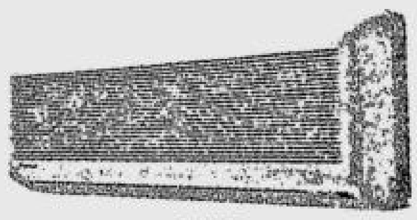
Nov. 30 is the Jewish Hanukkah or Festival of the Lights, celebrating the victory of the Maccabees in taking back the temple in Jerusalem from the Syrians.

Dec. 5 (or 6, depending again on the new moon's sighting) is Eid-al-Fitr (Hari Raya Puasa in Malaysia) marking the end of Ramadan. Last year President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo declared Eid-al-Fitr a national holiday for the first time in Philippine history.

Note how many of the religious holidays, including Christmas, cluster around December, so it helps if you just greet friends a more generic "Happy Holidays" if you're not sure what their religion is. With time, the religious celebrations should become occasions for affirming one's own faith, even as we recognize other people's freedom to practice their own.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net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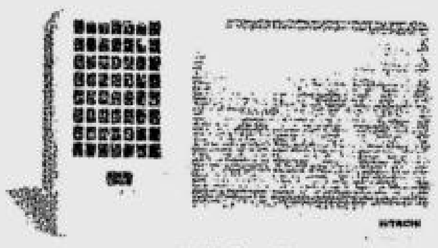
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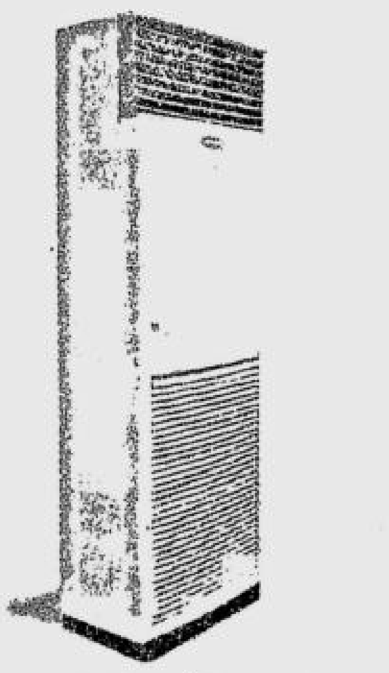
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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Israelis, Palestinians warn of retaliation

JERUSALEM—Israel says it will respond to a shooting spree by a Palestinian gunman in downtown Jerusalem that killed two women, while the Islamic movement Hamas says it's ready for "all-out war" after four of its militants were killed in an Israeli commando raid in the West Bank.

A recent lull in the fighting has given way to an upsurge of violence, including two episodes Tuesday, and both sides were warning that they would take retaliatory action.

In the Jerusalem shooting, a Palestinian gunman opened fire at pedestrians and people waiting at a bus stop. Police patrolling nearby were quick to arrive at the scene and exchanged fire with the assailant, chasing him into a parking lot where he was shot dead, police said.

Sixteen people were hit by the gunman during the shooting on a cold, rainy afternoon on busy Jaffa Street in west Jerusalem. Two women later died of their wounds, and another four people were seriously wounded in the shootout, police said, which lasted about 10 minutes.

"We are at war," proclaimed Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, who arrived at the scene to view the carnage shortly after the attack.

"This war is not taking place in some far-off battleground, but is happening here, at home, in shops, restaurants," Olmert told Israeli television.

In the aftermath of the attack, shopkeepers swept up the remains of shattered shopfront windows, and removed mannequins peppered with bullet holes. A puddle of blood stained the floor of a clothes shop, just a short distance from the site of a deadly suicide bombing attack on Dec. 1. Former US President Bill Clinton visited the bombing site on Monday.

Police said the already ample police presence in Israel's cities would be boosted Wednesday. Israel's security establishment, meanwhile, said they had warnings that more Palestinian attacks were planned.

The gunman, Saeed Ramadan, was a member of the Al-aqsa Brigades, a group linked to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah group, according to the group and the man's uncle, Adnan Ramadan. The shooting was part of a response to last week's killing of a leader of the group, sources in the group said. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

US-Montesinos links

LIMA—US officials continued working closely with Peruvian spymaster Vladimiro Montesinos in the anti-drug fight despite an Army officer's tip that he was involved with death squad killings, newly declassified documents show. The officer, a self-described member of a military death squad, offered in 1993 to provide US officials with information linking Montesinos to the group, according to a US Embassy cable released Tuesday. The latest declassified reports provide the clearest indication yet that US officials were aware early on that Montesinos, a key American ally in the drug war, was involved with a death squad. *AP*

Menem probed

BERN, Switzerland—Argentina has asked for Swiss help investigating allegations that former President Carlos Menem took bribes to cover up Iranian involvement in the 1994 bombing of a Buenos Aires Jewish center in which 86 people died, the Swiss government said. Federal Justice Department spokesperson Folco Galli said Tuesday that Argentine justice authorities formally asked Switzerland for judicial aid in the case in December. Officials in Buenos Aires did not immediately comment on whether they sought such help, but Swiss officials said last August that the Argentine government had filed three separate requests for assistance in another investigation of Menem. Swiss officials said in October they have blocked two bank accounts linked to him as a result. *AP*

Free of FMD

LONDON—The World Organization for Animal Health has declared Britain free of foot-and-mouth disease, paving the way for the full resumption of meat exports. A panel of experts at a meeting of the Paris-based body agreed to restore Britain's "foot-and-mouth free status without vaccination" for the purpose of international trade. The ruling means British meat, meat products and dairy products could soon be back on the tables of many foreign countries. Some European Union restrictions on British meat imports will remain. The statement came a week after the British government declared the country free of foot-and-mouth and almost a year after the first outbreak of the disease that led to the culling of more than 4 million animals. *AP*

Genocide conviction

THE HAGUE, Netherlands—Two Bosnian Serbs go on trial before an international tribunal Wednesday, accused of masterminding the genocide of hundreds of Croats and Muslims during the Bosnian war. Gen. Momir Talic and his close political ally, Radoslav Brdjanin, are charged with 12 counts of war crimes, including genocide. If found guilty, they could face life terms in a European prison. The UN tribunal has no death penalty. The prosecution says Talic, 59, and Brdjanin, 53, presided over the Krajina area that had some of the worst ethnic cleansing campaigns of the 1992-95 Bosnian war, a bloody purge that drove 100,000 people from their homes and left a trail of hundreds of dead bodies. *AP*

Misery in Congo

GOMA, Congo—Moderate earthquakes and a cold, heavy rain Wednesday added to the misery of hundreds of thousands of people in northeastern Congo, where a volcanic eruption destroyed 40 percent of the largest city in the region. The eruption of Mt. Nyiragongo on Jan. 17 has left 10,000 families without shelter and hundreds of thousands without any livelihood. Earthquakes continue to shake the region, some of them strong enough to destroy buildings that escaped the three huge lava flows that cut through the center of the city. *AP*

More US aid

BOGOTA, Colombia—President Andres Pastrana has called for expanded US military aid to combat rebels while holding out hope for a ceasefire in April. In an exclusive interview with The Associated Press, the president said his government wanted US soldiers to train Colombian troops to protect oil pipelines, bridges and other infrastructure from rebel attacks. Currently, US aid is restricted mainly to supporting Colombian anti-narcotics troops. "We are asking for collaboration in protecting the infrastructure," Pastrana said in the first interview he has given since Colombia's shaky peace process was dramatically revived last weekend. *AP*

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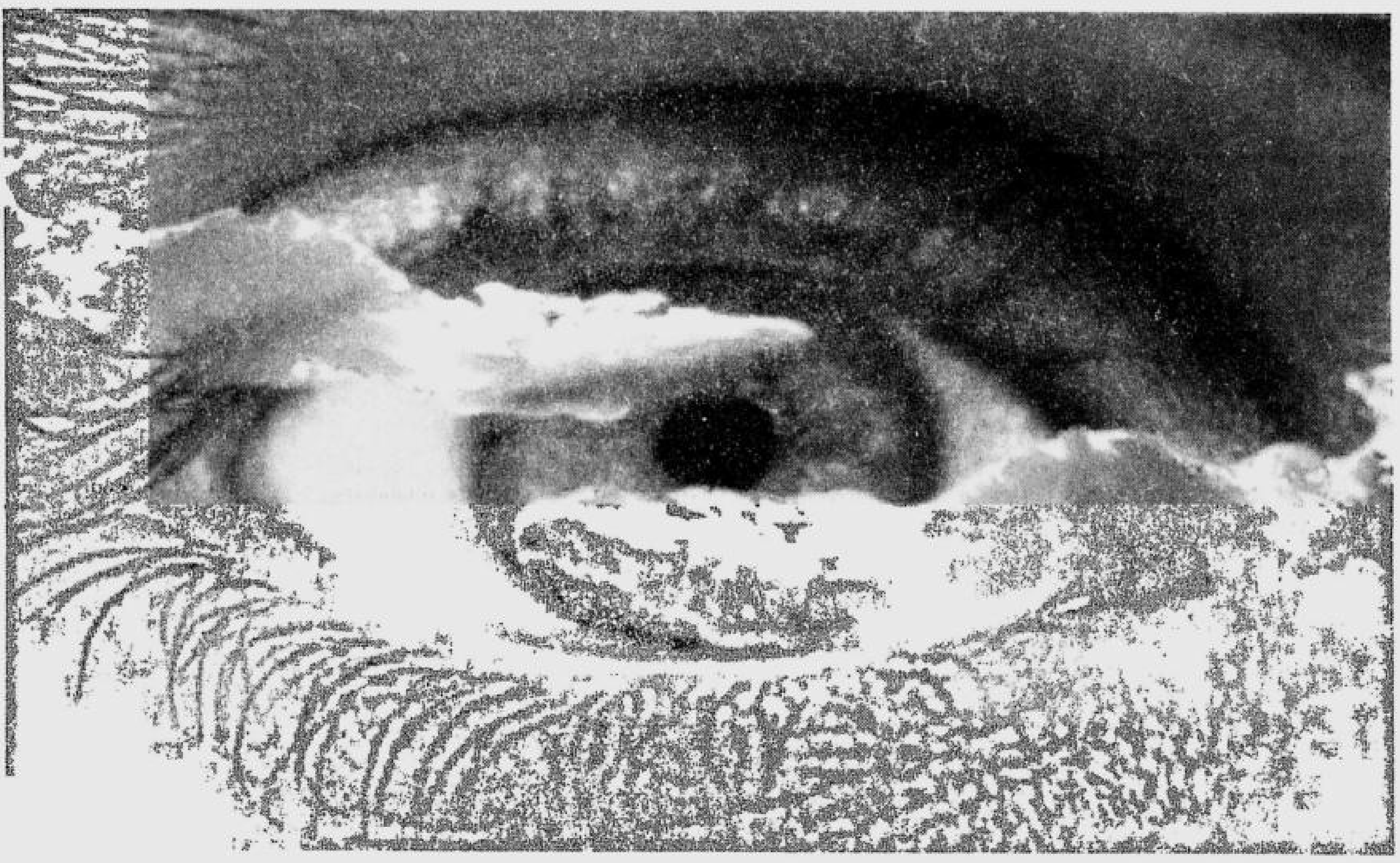

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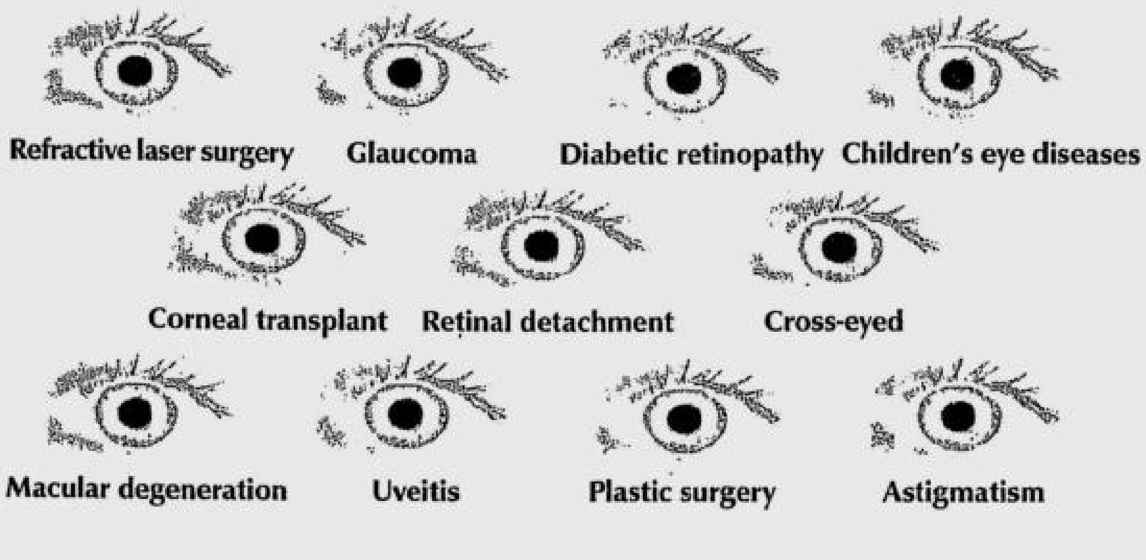

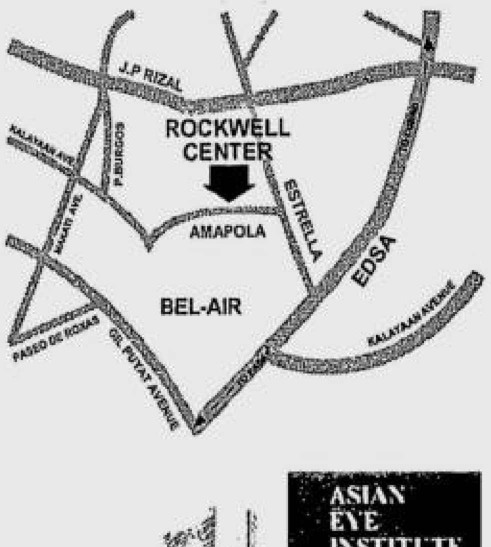

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Population of illegal immigrants in US doubles

WASHINGTON—The number of illegal immigrants in the United States more than doubled during the 1990s, Census Bureau estimates show.

Nearly half of these immigrants arrived from Mexico, lured by a then-strong economy and plentiful jobs.

But since the 2000 census was taken, much has changed for many of the roughly 8.7 million undocumented immigrants living in America. Some lost their jobs and returned to their native country.

And after the Sept. 11 attacks, the focus has shifted even more to closing immigration loopholes and tightening border patrols amid greater suspicion of foreigners.

For instance, the justice department has targeted for deportation thousands of men known to be from countries where Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network operates.

The men, thought to be in the country illegally, have ignored orders to leave, justice officials have said. Many, but not all, of those targeted are of Middle Eastern descent.

Preliminary estimates from the 2000 census show that about 115,000 people from Middle Eastern countries live in the United States illegally, or in "quasi-legal" status—refugees or people seeking political asylum.

While the vast majority of Middle Eastern immigrants are not terrorists, "the fact that tens of thousands of people from that region and millions more from the rest of the world can settle in the United States illegally means that terrorists who wish to (enter the United states) face few obstacles," said Steven Camarota, research director at the Center for Immigration Studies.

"We can't protect ourselves from terrorism without dealing with illegal immigration," Camarota said Tuesday. His group's mission statement says that it seeks "fewer immigrants but a warmer welcome for those admitted."

Critics favoring more restrictive immigration policy are unfairly using the terrorist attacks to advance their agenda, said Cecilia Munoz, vice president for policy at the National Council of La Raza, a Hispanic advocacy group.

"It is unreasonable to use this as an opportunity to stir up fear and division," said Munoz.

Census estimates show that the number of undocumented immigrants in the United States rose nearly 5 million during the decade, to 8.7 million in 2000. Of that total, almost 3.9 million, or 44 percent, were from Mexico.

The Census Bureau did not ask about citizenship status on its forms. Estimates were derived from Census 2000 data and Immigration and Naturalization Service records.

Census Bureau analyst Joe Costanzo stressed the figures were preliminary and could change as more research became available. *AP*

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5 Bangladeshis held for Calcutta attack

CALCUTTA, India—Police arrested five Bangladeshis and detained three Indian teachers at an Islamic school for suspected involvement in Tuesday's attack on policemen guarding a US cultural center, a top government official said Wednesday.

"We are verifying their links with Pakistan's spy agency and a Dubai-based mafia don, but we can't disclose details at this stage," Sourin Roy, chief secretary of the West Bengal state government, told reporters.

He said the arrests were made Tuesday night on the outskirts of Basirhat, 65 km north of Calcutta and close to the India-Bangladesh border. The men were to appear in court later Wednesday.

Calcutta police said they seized a motorcycle belonging to Korban Ali, one of the arrested religious teachers, and they suspected it might have been used in the attack on the American Center by motorcycle-riding assailants who killed four Indian policeman and injured 20 other people.

One of the contract guards on duty at the American Center during the 6:30 a.m. Tuesday attack was hurt.

Indian officials have blamed the attack on Harkat-ul-Jehadi-al-Islami, a Pakistan-based group with a little known branch in Bangladesh, which has been fighting since 1994 to merge India's portion of Kashmir with Pakistan. It was founded by Fazlur Rahman Khalili, who is based in Lahore, Pakistan, R.S. Bhullar, the director general of India's Border Security Force, said in Srinagar.

An additional 200 militants belonging to the group are suspected to have infiltrated into Kashmir since the United States launched military strikes against Afghanistan in October, Bhullar said.

India accuses Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence spy agency of supporting the militants with arms and training, a charge that Pakistan denied. The Harkat group also denied Tuesday any involvement in the Tuesday attack on the American center.

The Harkat branch in Bangladesh had links with the Taliban militia in Afghanistan, which supported Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network, Bangladesh's former home minister, Mohammad Nasim, said in July 2000 after police accused it of planting explosives in a soccer field before an address by ex-Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. *AP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, January 24, 2002
2nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **1 S 18:6-9; 19:1-7**
Gospel: **Mk 3:7-12**

Jesus and his disciples withdrew to the lakeside and a large crowd from Galilee followed him. A great number of people also came from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, Transjordan and from the region of Tyre and Sidon, for they had heard of all that he was doing.

Because of the crowd, Jesus told his disciples to have a boat ready for him, to prevent the people from crushing him. He healed so many that all who had diseases kept pressing towards him to touch him. Even the people who had evil spirits, whenever they saw him, would fall down before him and cry out, "You are the Son of God." But he warned them sternly not to tell anyone who he was.

Commentary

Often churches and cathedrals are not enough to contain the crowds who want to see the Pope. Squares, stadiums and big parks are being used to proclaim the clear stand of the church with regards to human rights and social issues. The crowds followed Jesus, willing to see him and listen to him, because they were longing for what He was saying and doing. The place of encounter is not the Temple, neither the synagogue but the lakeshore, the creation; the new wine cannot be contained in old wineskins. Jesus recognized the dignity of each person, trying to do good to all in need. His preaching and his deeds focus on the needs of the people. And because he acknowledges people, people acknowledge and recognize him, even the "impure spirits," troublemakers and enemies of the gospel.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY)—Robbery with homicide—In robbery with homicide cases, the prosecution need only to prove these elements: (a) the taking of personal property with violence or intimidation against persons or with force upon things; (b) the property taken belongs to another; (c) the taking be done with *animo lucrandi*; and, (d) on the occasion of the robbery or by reason thereof homicide in its generic sense was committed. In robbery with homicide, what is essential is that there be "a direct relation, an intimate connection between robbery and the killing, whether the latter be prior or subsequent to the former or whether both crimes be committed at the same time." There is no question that the original and principal intention of he armed men was to get the money. This is evident from the testimony. As the robbery resulted in the killing of the security guard, the offense committed by the malefactors is indubitably the special complex crime of robbery with homicide. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Pardo, First Division, People v. Maxion. G.R. No. 135145, July 19, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

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Kmart files for bankruptcy protection

DETROIT—When Sebastian S. Kresge opened his first store here in 1899, he sold everything for 5 and 10 cents, a marketing strategy that caught on and helped turn his company into a multibillion-dollar discount chain of more than 2,100 stores.

Analysts say it's that kind of vision that Kmart Corp.—named so in 1977 because Kmarts were Kresge's most successful stores—needs to bring itself back.

On Tuesday, Kmart filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy and became the largest retailer to seek court protection from creditors. Kmart filed for protection because of several factors, including lower-than-expected holiday sales and earnings performance in the fourth quarter. Fourth quarter earnings are to be released next week.

The No. 3 discount retailer known for the BlueLight Special and Martha Stewart fashions has struggled against No. 1 Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and No. 2 Target Corp.

What Kmart needs, retail analysts say, is a plan.

Conor Reilly, senior partner with Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher, said Kmart needed to ascertain "what their sort of retailing rationale is, what's going to bring customers to them as opposed to other competitors."

"They have let things get in such a downward spiral," he said.

As part of its reorganization, Troy, Michigan-based Kmart said it would evaluate the performance of every store and terms of every lease by the end of the first quarter of 2002, and would close unprofitable or underperforming stores. Some analysts said Kmart would close up to 700 of its stores.

Kmart has about 275,000 employees and stores in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands and Guam.

Kmart, which filed its petition in US Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois in Chicago, said it had secured $2 billion in financing from Credit Suisse First Boston, Fleet Retail Finance Inc., General Electric Capital Corp. and J.P. Morgan Chase Bank. The financing, approved late Tuesday by Bankruptcy Court Judge Susan Pierson Sonderby, will help the company's cash flow while it restructures.

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon and the Eastern section of Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 22°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HI 24° Lo 12°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 28° Lo 19°
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 20°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 19°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HI 26° Lo 19°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 21°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 24°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 24°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	HI 30° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 23°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 21°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/01/24/02

ROUNDUP

2 rebels, worker slain

LEGAZPI CITY—Three persons, including two alleged members of the New People's Army, were killed in two separate clashes on Tuesday. In Camarines Norte, two unidentified rebels were killed in an encounter with soldiers in Barangay San Isidro, Jose Panganiban town. A report reaching Camp Gen. Simeon Ola here said members of the 31st Infantry Battalion of the Army's 203rd Infantry Brigade clashed with 10 NPA guerrillas. Recovered from the rebels were an M-14 rifle, ammunition and personal belongings. In Jovellar, Albay, three alleged NPA rebels shot dead Dexter Sambahaon, 29, a worker, while he was on his way to work early Tuesday in Barangay Kalsada.

Roly Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

22 villages 'liberated'

LEGAZPI CITY—The Philippine Army said it expects the activities of the NPA this year to wane in Albay. Col. Dante Bonifacio, commander of the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade, said rebel "atrocities" waned last year because of the soldiers' intensified anti-insurgency campaign. He said his troopers "liberated" 22 villages considered highly influenced or infiltrated by the NPA, wounded 12 rebels and captured 20 others, overran a major rebel camp in Bolo Village, Guinobatan, seized 38 firearms, and received the surrender of 37 rebel supporters last year. In the third district, over 4,000 operations resulted in 390 armed encounters and four raids.

Roly Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Man kills 2 sons

NAGA CITY—A man believed to be suffering from mental illness ran amuck, killed his two sons and hurt his wife and two other relatives early Tuesday in Barangay Bonot-Sta. Rosa, Calabanga, Camarines Sur, police reported. Chief Insp. Marcos Rivero, Calabanga police chief, said Roberto Lumbao, 26, killed his sons Ryan, 4, and Roger, 3, and injured his wife Regie, 25, sister-in-law Evelyn Samontañes, 30, and niece Marilyn Samontañes, 14. Rivero said Lumbao told him that he suddenly blacked out after an altercation with his wife and children.

Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Fire kills old man

NAGA CITY—A fire of unknown origin razed a stall inside the public market of San Jose, Camarines Sur early Monday and burned to death its owner. Police identified the victim as Marcelo Frielda, 72, who was sleeping inside the stall he owned when the fire broke out. Police investigators have yet to determine the origin and cause of the fire.

Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Library up for bidding

NAGA CITY—The city public library located at the downtown area has been put up for bidding since last year, but no one has so far shown interest to bid for it. Nelson Legacion, bids and awards committee chair, said the initial bid price was not less than P26 million, which is the appraised value. He said the city government was now arranging for a negotiated sale after several bids failed.

Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Camarines' poorest get ₱5M

NAGA CITY—The Kalahi Program, President Macapagal-Arroyo's program for the poor, will be tested in three towns in Camarines Sur, according to Undersecretary Crisanto Castro of the Presidential, Assistance for Regional Development Office. Under the program, the towns of Gainza, Buhi and Balatan will be granted P5 million to uplift the lives of the poorest 200 in each town through livelihood projects. He added that infrastructure projects would be included, if needed.

Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

GMA to grace Palaro

NAGA CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo will grace the Palarong Pambansa which will be held in Iriga City this year, said Undersecretary Crisanto Castro of the Presidential Assistance for Regional Development Office. He said Ms Macapagal was scheduled to go to Iriga on Feb. 11. Earlier, Naga bidded for the hosting of the Palarong Pambansa, but its mayor, Jesse Robredo, was not keen on hosting the national athletics competition.

Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Pollution delays plans

MONKAYO, Compostela Valley—The pollution of the Naboc River in Monkayo town has derailed plans of the provincial government to construct an irrigation facility that would benefit farms in the low-lying areas of Compostela Valley. Gov. Jose Caballero said the primitive ore-processing method used by small and medium-scale miners has increased the level of mercury in the river. Caballero said taking irrigation water from the Naboc River would only endanger consumers and the communities in the areas served by the irrigation system.

Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Rise in anemia cases in Cordillera alarms docs

BAGUIO CITY—Health officials here have raised an alarm over the increasing number of farmers afflicted with aplastic anemia caused by pesticide exposure.

Dr. Jasmin Igama of the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center said a prevalence rate of 5-7 percent in aplastic anemia cases was monitored in the Cordillera last year. She, however, did not cite the total number of patients afflicted with the disease.

"This kind of anemia is the one closest to leukemia," she said.

Igama said that according to international health data, a country should have a prevalence rate of below 2 percent to be considered "anemia-free."

"The region's rate is far higher than the international data. Farmers or those living near farms are our usual patients," she said.

Massive exposure to benzyne-containing pesticides is the major cause of aplastic anemia, she said.

Igama also said their monitoring was supported by a study conducted by the Department of Health in 1996.

"We distributed questionnaires to farmers in 1996. At least 80 percent of the respondents admitted that they don't use protective gears when using pesticides in spraying (their crops)," she said.

Thus, farmers tend to inhale pesticide vapors, which also freely enter the skin pores and cause the disease. Getting afflicted, she said, was a "slow process" and the symptoms were not easily detected.

Farmers who come to the hospital for medical examinations are those who have been exposed to pesticides for many years she said.

"By that time (when farmers seek medical attention), they have already developed severe anemia," she said.

Igama said that most of the time, aplastic anemia patients developed leukemia.

She said that like leukemia patients, aplastic anemia patients had to undergo blood transfusion or bone marrow transplants.

"But even after a bone marrow transplant, chances that aplastic anemia cases will not develop to leukemia are still 50-50," she said.

The DOH has issued a health advisory to Cordillera farmers to wear protective gears when spraying their farms with pesticides.

"But it seems that people are ignoring the warning and still go on with their usual (unprotected) practices when using pesticides," she said. *Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

LEGAL, LABOR WOES

Napocor plans to sell assets

BAGUIO CITY—The National Power Corp. (Napocor) is preparing to sell some of its highly valued assets to investors this year because many of its operating plants remain embroiled in legal and labor disputes, a team sent by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon concluded here this week.

Biazon's investigating team has been monitoring one of Napocor's highly profitable assets, the 100-megawatt Binga hydroelectric plant in Benguet, whose labor and corporate problems can already hamper Napocor's marketing "roadshow" and sale, a member of the team told the INQUIRER on Wednesday.

"The inquiry is in aid of two (aforming) legislations. (The first measure) will protect investors of the electric power industry from being duped into buying bad government assets. (The second measure) will protect both the personnel of Napocor and of (independent power producers or IPPs), whose plants will soon be on the auction block," said the source.

"This is one more issue Napocor will need to explain (to the public) after that (Jan. 21) Luzon blackout," he said.

The internal rules and regulations (IRR) of the controversial Electric Industry Reform Act (EIRA) are due for approval by President Macapagal-Arroyo this week.

The IRR will guide government in processing the sale of six Generation Companies (Gencos), a Napocor holding firm and the National Transmission Co. (Transco) by February, according to Alfredo Licudine Jr., chief of the planning office of Genco 2 in Baguio.

Napocor president Jesus Alcordo and Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. are scheduled next week to fly to London and New York, where they will conduct a "roadshow" or a preliminary marketing presentation of Napocor assets to power industry firms.

Licudine said Napocor was "cleaning up" conflicts generated by controversial build-operate-transfer (BOT) and IPP contracts, covering 1992 to 1997, in anticipation of this year's sale.

He said previous Napocor administrations entered into contracts guided by "purely political decisions."

Licudine said the Binga Dam, which he described as one such "political" contract, was being packaged with the idle 75-megawatt Ambuklao hydroelectric plant under a new rehabilitate-operate-and leaseback (ROL) contract to correct two botched contracts that had affected their operations.

Both plants were the first assets to be offered to private sector management, or what Napocor had referred to as IPPs, in 1992. But the plants' contractors failed to fulfill their commitments.

Napocor terminated the services of Meralco Industrial and Engineering Services Corp. (Miescor) for delays in repairing the heavily silted Ambuklao Dam.

Napocor also terminated a similar contract over the more profitable Binga Dam in August 2000, or after 10 years, which saw the ROL contract exchange hands among several leaseholders.

"The original Binga IPP contract was criticized by Napocor employees, led then by Napocor Northern Luzon supervisor Rolando Quilala, who is now Napocor vice president supervising all Gencos. We were wondering why Napocor wanted to privatize Binga when it was very profitable," Licudine revealed.

The Binga contract was awarded on July 5, 1993 to the Chinese government-led China Chiang Jiang Electric Corp. (CCJEC), but a still unexplained internal crisis forced its takeover by CCJEC's Filipino counterparts, who renamed their venture Binga Hydroelectric Plant Inc. (Bhepi).

The Bhepi, in turn, was swamped by a power struggle that pit Bhepi president Catalino Tan with supposed investment partner Thunder International Inc. led by Herman Ho.

Napocor assumed jurisdiction over the Binga plant by asserting contract scheduling violations. It acquired the services of the former Binga Dam employees to keep the plant running at full capacity. That contract had since lapsed, allowing Napocor to bid out the power plant.

Unlike Ambuklao, however, the Binga plant is operational and easily generates P800 million worth of electricity sales annually, a Binga employee said.

Its revenue base appeared to be one reason Napocor had been rushing its sale, "and why so many interest groups want to control it," the employee said.

But for Biazon, Binga Dam is turning out to be "proof" of how Napocor tends to "mismanage its affairs in addressing the fate of its employees," the source said.

"On a wider scale, what is happening to Binga can happen to other Napocor assets or IPP-managed plants which have not resolved their problems with employees, and that is why (Biazon) wants to put up laws protecting the employees," the source said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

APPREHENSION

DENNIS SABANGAN

This young peanut vendor walking past an MNLF Army integree on the streets of Jolo has every reason to be apprehensive—the capital town of Sulu has again become a bloody battlefield between authorities and supporters of jailed Moro leader Nur Misuari.

6 die in jeep crash in Kalinga

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—At least six people were killed while several others were injured when a passenger jeepney fell into a ravine in Tabuk, Kalinga on Tuesday morning, reports reaching the INQUIRER said.

Reports from the Army's 21st Infantry Battalion based in Kalinga identified the fatalities as Agaruan Murat, Francisco Langkit, Nancy Bulao, Aurora Adong, Francisco Atuban and Amy Alit.

The victims were killed after the jeepney they were riding in fell into a 200-meter ravine and rolled into a river in Barangay Lucog, about 15 km from the town proper.

The jeepney was on its way to the town proper when the accident occurred at 11 a.m. in Sitio Gunugon in Barangay Lucog. Army reports did not say how many people were in the jeepney, but said it was "packed with passengers."

Lt. Col. Teodoro Torralba, commanding officer of the Army's 21st IB, said rescuers scoured the river for survivors.

The driver, Venancio Dang-iw, and several injured passengers were taken to the Kalinga Provincial Hospital in Tabuk. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Nursing student's body found in Roxas City

By GERRY T. PAGHARION
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—The decomposing body of a nursing student was found on a vacant lot in Sitio San Juan this city on Jan. 15, three days after she was reported missing by her family.

The victim was identified as Charibelle Lobo, 18, a second year nursing student at the St. Anthony College here. Residents discovered her body on a grassy lot only about 50 meters from her home.

Police said the victim could have been raped before she was killed because her pants had been pulled down to her knees and she was no longer wearing any undergarment.

Her bag was found next to her body. Her purse was also divested of P3,000 in cash, which was reportedly sent by her mother who is based in the United States.

Homicide investigator William Limjuico said they already had leads as to the identity of the suspects, but he declined to elaborate.

Alfredo Lobo, the victim's father, said that on Jan. 12, Charibelle told him that she would go with her classmates on a field trip.

But Charibelle's friend and neighbor later told Alfredo that his daughter actually attended a birthday party in Panay town, about 10 kilometers southeast of this city, on that day.

Alfredo said he did not get worried when Charibelle did not return home that night because he thought she was sleeping over in the house of one of her friends.

But the victim's classmate told the police that they left their friend's house in Panay at about 3 p.m. that day. Upon arriving in Roxas City, Charibelle and her friends dropped by the house of another classmate in Barangay Banica, where they stayed up to 6 p.m.

The group then went to the city proper where they parted ways at about 7 p.m. It was the last time that Charibelle's friends saw her alive, police said.

300 rally in Ecija to protest summary killings

CABANATUAN CITY—Members of militant groups in Nueva Ecija demanded justice for the 24 victims of unsolved killings in three towns in Nueva Ecija.

About 300 members of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Nueva Ecija (Bayan-NE) and Bayan Muna, together with officers of various cause-oriented groups in the province, aired their demands in a march here that was timed with the commemoration of the 15th anniversary of the Mendiola Massacre on Tuesday.

The ralliers also accompanied the relatives of five residents of Pantabangan town, who were killed in an alleged encounter on Oct. 8 last year, to the provincial prosecutor's office and filed complaints against the soldiers involved in the incident.

Their families said the five were civilians who were victims of alleged summary execution by the military. Army officials in Northern and Central Luzon, however, said the incident was a legitimate encounter and the supposed victims were New People's Army rebels.

Danny Macapagal, secretary general of Bayan-NE, said a fact-finding investigation of their group showed that the victims' exhumed bodies showed signs of torture and "unusual" injuries.

He said a medico-legal officer of the Commission on Human Rights and a noted anthropologist reported that the bodies of the victims showed that they were dragged while still alive.

The groups also demanded justice for the 17 victims of the 1987 Lupao Massacre and for the two farmers killed in General Natividad town on Nov. 14.

Macapagal said the Lupao and Pantabangan incidents appeared to be similar in nature. In both incidents, an Army officer was killed by suspected rebels and their followers vented their ire on residents in the areas.

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

S. Mindanao workers stuck in wage hike dream

DAVAO CITY—Workers in Southern Mindanao will not receive any increase in wages, not even in the near future.

This is in contrast with the P20 increase granted by the labor department to workers in Central Mindanao.

However, the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB) in Southern Mindanao said it approved the granting of an additional cost of living allowance (Cola) to the workers, retroactive Jan. 1.

Manuel Roldan, director of the regional labor office here, said he acknowledged that the P15 additional Cola was far from ideal considering that workers in the region still live below the standard living wage.

A survey conducted by the National Statistics Office here indicated that the ideal living wage should be P240 per day.

The poverty threshold was based on the NSO's computation using P6,572.13 per month for a family of six.

Roldan, who also chairs the RTWPB, said it might take longer for companies to grant salary increases, considering the global economic slowdown.

"That's sort of a dream for now," he said.

Roldan defended the board's decision to give additional Cola instead of a wage increase, saying the board wanted to strike a balance between companies hurting from the economic slowdown and the condition of the workers.

He said that with the additional benefit, a workers earning was brought up to P4 above the poverty threshold of P158.

"We feel that everybody can afford the P15. That's our presumption," he said.

Bienvenido Cariaga, management representative to the RTWPB, said that although they studied the market and found that business activities in the region were down, they were still convinced that an increase in workers' salaries and benefits was needed.

"We felt that the P15 in Cola is enough to alleviate the economic conditions of the workers," he said.

Roldan also said not all companies might be able to grant the Cola.

In Kidapawan City, "*Hayahay nga kinabuhi* (A better life)" was how radio station dxND security guard Hermie Dugaduga described the P20-increase in daily wage that was granted for Central Mindanao's private sector workers by the wage board.

Dugaduga, who earns P4,500 a month minus 23 percent for the agency he is connected with, said the increase would be "enough for the needs of my first and new-born child."

The new wage increase will bring to P170 the daily wage level for industrial and commercial or business sector workers in the provinces of Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat and in the cities of Tacurong, Koronadal, Cotabato and Kidapawan.

Aida Estabillo, labor regional director, said the rising cost of commodities prompted the board to increase wages.

On Jan. 16, the board approved the P10 Provisional Emergency Relief Allowance or Pera. Another P10 -increase will take effect on May 2.

"There will be no exemptions from the wage order," Estabillo said. ***Joel Escovilla and Rosa-May de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Mindanaoans urge appointments body to confirm DOTC chief

A MINDANAO-WIDE clamor for Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez's confirmation is emerging as a large bipartisan group of Mindanao congressmen joined leaders and groups from the South in endorsing his confirmation.

Thirty-one lawmakers belonging to the Mindanao Legislators' Association signed a resolution saying that Alvarez, being a native of Davao del Norte, "is sympathetic to and is knowledgeable about the cause of the Mindanaoans and Mindanao especially in areas where there are underdeveloped communications and transportation facilities."

To better address the concerns of Mindanaoans, they said in a statement, it was necessary to appoint a leader who knows their condition.

It is important to have a native of Mindanao at the DOTC post in order "to protect the national interest and considering the urgency of developing Mindanao," the statement said.

Other Mindanao groups echoed similar sentiments and came out with separate resolutions endorsing the confirmation of the DOTC chief.

The statement quoted Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte as saying President Macapagal-Arroyo made the right decision in appointing Alvarez because the DOTC chief is "a no-nonsense executive who knows what he has to do at the department because he is familiar with the transportation industry."

"There is no proof that could disqualify him from office . . . or evidence linking him to any anomaly," Duterte said.

He said he had long known Alvarez since they were both congressmen representing two different Davao districts.

"I have observed him at close range and I can vouch for his honesty and devotion to the transportation industry's progress," Duterte reportedly said.

In "these crucial times, Mindanao needs another face in the President's Cabinet to represent the South, historically troubled by secession and revolution," he said.

The press statement identified other groups endorsing Alvarez as the Mayors' League of Lanao del Sur, the traditional leaders of the 15 royal houses of the four principalities of the two Lanao provinces, Federation of Bangsamoro Youth Organizations, Lanao Rebel Returnees Association, and Lanao del Norte Electric Cooperative.

The Lanao mayors said they were convinced of the good track record and expertise of Alvarez, and his "sense of concern to our total development as well as that of other cultural minorities."

For its part, the Bangsamoro Youth Organizations called Alvarez "visionary, proactive and pro-development."

Anti-polio bid rushed in De Oro

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Health personnel here are working double time to conduct polio tests and immunization in the villages after the resurgence of polio virus infection in the country.

Dr. Marianne Trabajo, chief epidemiologist of the Department of Health in Northern Mindanao, said the tests, called surveillance, were immediately restored after the detection of polio cases in the country.

An 8-year-old boy from Barangay Lapasan was the first to contract the virus, years after the country was declared polio-free.

Two more cases, one each in Laguna and Cavite, were detected, causing alarm among health officials.

Trabajo said it was important to determine if polio is indeed coming back.

"There are other diseases that show the same symptoms as polio," she said.

In Barangay Lapasan here, health workers tested about 35 children, including the siblings of the boy, who tested positive for polio.

Trabajo said the boy's mother told her that the rest of her children had not been given anti-polio vaccination. ***Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

I AM PROUD TO BE A MAPUAN !

Jaime Hernandez Pajara graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, Class 1955, from Mapua Institute of Technology

Engr. Pajara's first job was with the government's Bureau of Public Works and Highways. He then joined a number of private construction firms and held various positions ranging from project engineer, project manager, operations manager and general manager. In 1974, he established his own firm, J.H. Pajara Construction Corporation. This firm became well-known for building bridges and roadways and for general engineering works. He built buildings and irrigation earthworks and developed sites, waterworks and sewerage as well as ports and harbors.

Engr. Pajara, or Jimmy, is a Past President of the National Association of Mapua Alumni (NAMA) and of the MIT CE-EnSE Alumni Association. He is very active in the Philippine Constructors Association (PCA) and was its President from 1998 to 1999. He is also active in civic organizations particularly in the Lions Club International where he was District Governor and Council Chairman for the State Council of Governors

Jimmy continues to be active in Mapua Tech's alumni affairs. As a true Mapuan, he continues to serve his fellow alumni and his Alma Mater.

JAIME H. PAJARA
Civil Engineering, Class of 1955
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Mapua Tech and the National Association of Mapua Alumni (NAMA) are truly proud of the achievements of Engr. Jaime H. Pajara in the construction industry and as a civil engineer. Jimmy, on the other hand, is proud to be a Mapuan!

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French journalist's body to be sent home soon

BY DEBRA JANE MAGALLON
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The body of a French journalist who died of a heart attack in Bohol on Monday was brought to Manila early yesterday on board a commercial airline.

Tourism Undersecretary Oscar Palabyab arranged the transfer of the remains of Oliver Ponchy to Manila so that it could be immediately transported to his home in Paris, sources at the Department of Tourism said.

The same source said the French consulate paid for the transport, as well as the casket worth P300,000, which was specially made for Ponchy because he would not fit in a regular casket.

While the DOT has refused to give details on the transfer of the French journalist's body, the DOT in Cebu released a statement saying that Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon and Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado have expressed condolence to the family of Ponchy. The statement did not say if Ponchy's family in Paris had been informed about his death.

Ponchy, 46 a freelance writer for the Paris-based travel magazine Univers de Voyage, died at about 6 p.m. on Jan. 21 in Bohol.

He was with two other Frenchmen, seven Germans and four British, all travel writers, who participated in a five-day familiarization tour of Cebu and Bohol.

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Term		12	18	24	36	48	60
D/P	Net D/P	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
20%	100,000	52,008	35,905	28,566	20,423	16,546	14,484

LOW MONTHLY PLANS

STRADA (ESP: P994,000)

Term		12	18	24	36	48	60
D/P	Net D/P	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
50%	497,000	43,388	29,954	23,851	17,052	13,815	12,093

ENDEAVOR XT (ESP: P715,000)

Term		12	18	24	36	48	60
D/P	Net D/P	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
50%	357,500	31,210	21,547	17,157	12,266	9,938	8,699

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TAX CREDIT SCAM AND PETRON SCAM: THE P539-MILLION CONNECTION

Between December 1995 and March 1996, a criminal syndicate stole P539 million worth of Petron check payments due the Bureau of Customs, with the checks cashed at Luke Roxas' Bank of Southeast Asia. When the scam was discovered in 1997, Petron paid Customs P539 million in tax credit certificates. Rep. Oscar Moreno now says these TCCs were fraudulent.

	Tax Credit Scam	Petron Scam
Fact-finding	Inter-agency unit's findings disregarded by Ombudsman	Inter-agency unit's findings disregarded by Ombudsman
Fate of major players	Petron, Shell, Chingkoe executives not included in preliminary investigation of Ombudsman	Petron, Bank of SEA, Skybound executives not included in preliminary investigation of Ombudsman
Role of Monico Jacob, Petron chair 1994-1998	Petron chair is defendant in Sandiganbayan case involving TCCs	Petron chair OKd payment of P539 million in TCCs; now financial advisor to Luke Roxas, whose bank cashed the Petron scam checks in 1995-1996
Role of ACCRA	Law firm is counsel of Pacifico Cruz, Shell president and principal in tax credit scam, per Task Force findings; firm also longtime retainer of Shell and Petron	Law firm is counsel of Luke Roxas in Petron scam and in impeachment case vs. Ombudsman (where Roxas denied bribing Desierto to sit on Petron scam case)

INQGRAPHIC/ESAMBO

DESIERTO

(From page A1)

accusation of his own, saying it was Moreno's senatorial ambition which led the solon to make what he called in a radio interview as baseless and politically motivated charges. "I heard he wants to be a senator so he's leveling these charges against me."

His spokesperson said the same thing. "That was a hell of a publicity stunt to prop up his political ambition to become a senator at the expense of Ombudsman Aniano A. Desierto," Atty. Jose de Jesus Jr. said.

De Jesus said Moreno "just got his facts from thin air," but his other statements revealed that he had not given the privilege speech a close reading.

De Jesus focused on the passing mention by Moreno of the dismissal of previous cases for the Ombudsman's failure to prosecute, but had almost nothing to say about Moreno's main charge: that Desierto had reneged on several agreements with the Task Force hammered out in a series of meetings between October and November last year. Aside from Desierto, Assistant Ombudsman Edward Pagunsan and graft investigator James Viernes attended the meetings.

Petron scam

In his privilege speech, Moreno also drew intriguing comparisons between the tax credit scam and the so-called Petron scam, in which a criminal syndicate siphoned off payments Petron intended for the Bureau of Customs between December 1995 and March 1996. The syndicate cashed the checks, worth a total of P539 million, at the Bank of Southeast Asia, then owned by banker and realtor Luke Roxas.

Moreno said that when the scam was discovered in 1997, Petron was forced to pay customs bureau the same amount—but Moreno said Petron used fraudulent tax credits to settle its obligation.

"Mr. Speaker, there is a need to immediately ascertain whether the P539 million in tax credit certificates paid by Petron to the Bureau of Customs were fraudulent or not. I have received reliable information that they were!" Moreno said.

An impeachment case against Desierto was filed by lawyer Ernesto Francisco and endorsed by Moreno, among others, alleging that Roxas and Francisco had bribed the Ombudsman to sit on the Petron scam cases for some time, ostensibly to hold off a bank run. The complaint was found sufficient in form but deficient in substance.

The House is scheduled to vote soon in plenary session on the decision of the House committee on justice junking Francisco's impeachment complaint against Desierto.

"Mr. Speaker, we have just been given another chance to find out for the people if the Ombudsman is really their protector as mandated by the Constitution or, on the contrary, he is their worst enemy," Moreno said in his 18-page speech titled "The Whitewash of the Grandmother of All Scams—How Ombudsman Desierto bid the tax credit scam goodbye."

He said that his disclosures against the controversial Ombudsman should give "a more compelling reason for us to give a second look at the impeachment complaint against Desierto."

After his speech, Bukidnon Rep. Nereus Acosta stood up to congratulate Moreno for moving to reinvestigate the tax credit scam.

San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora also moved to support a reinvestigation of the tax credit scam. He revealed that he knew that the task force formed during the Estrada administration was able to uncover fraud involving as much as P9 billion.

Zamora was the executive secretary for most of the short-lived Estrada administration.

In reply, Moreno assured Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano that he was not moved by any personal motives when he made the disclosures or even when he endorsed the impeachment complaint against Desierto last year.

Just like the hearing of the impeachment complaint against Desierto by the House committee on justice, Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio was present when Moreno delivered his privilege speech and during the interpellation.

The deputy ombudsman, who publicly defended Desierto from the impeachment complaint filed against him, was seen taking notes and using his cellular phone.

Six agreements

Moreno revealed that the task force, which is headed by Finance Undersecretary Cornelio Gison, agreed in several meetings between October and November 2001 on the following:

"There will be full coordination at all times between the Ombudsman and Task Force 156 to ensure the successful prosecution of the Tax Credit Scam cases unlike in the past."

The task force "will handle the investigation and case buildup since it is better-equipped than the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will only provide legal advice on the nature of the complaint to be filed."

Once the task force files a complaint, the Ombudsman will "immediately conduct preliminary investigation on the case. There will be no more fact-finding" by the Ombudsman.

The "first cases to be filed shall be the Chingkoe cases."

"The legal strategy for the Chingkoe cases would be to file one case per company, or a total of 12 cases, to strengthen the cases. This is because each company (had) a unique modus operandi and involves a different set of respondents other than the Chingkoe spouses."

Both parties agreed that there was "enough evidence to warrant the filing of 12 separate plunder cases."

Moreno criticized Desierto's consolidated plunder case on the following grounds.

- It did not include as respondents the officials of the Petron and Pilipinas Shell who played a role in the scam.
- The filing of the consolidated case would "kiss" the 12 plunder cases being investigated by the task force goodbye.
- The case was not prepared well because the documentation was incomplete and that the Ombudsman even "unnecessarily exposed a vital witness by naming her in the complaint despite an earlier agreement" not to do so.

Moreno also accused Desierto of furnishing the respondents of the case copies of the confidential documents which he said could be used by the latter in their defense.

Without basis

Desierto cried foul over Moreno's use of the legislative tradition of a privilege speech. "He would level his accusations against me in a privilege speech so that he could not be charged. He wants congressional protection, so his accusations must be without basis," Desierto said.

"(But in cases like this), the accuser must be accountable," Desierto added.

He charged that the first impeachment case against him was so weak his detractors in the House had to invent another charge to pave the way for a new impeachment case against him.

"They are in effect, paralyzing the Office of the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman is under attack, the whole institution is under attack," Desierto said.

The Office of the Ombudsman handles criminal cases against government officials before these are filed before the Sandiganbayan, or the country's anti-graft court.

Desierto said the judicial system was the anchor of the country's democracy and it is being damaged by such political charges.

"I don't know if they know the meaning of plunder. The charges reek of ignorance. It's impossible for the Ombudsman to accumulate P5.3 billion," Desierto added.

The new impeachment case against Desierto comes in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision to create a special division of the Sandiganbayan to try the plunder case against former President Joseph Estrada and related cases exclusively.

Desierto was upbeat about the court's resolution, saying the prosecution could wrap up the case within six months following the creation of the new division.

The Ombudsman said he was willing to put in more hours into the Estrada case. He even suggested scheduling more trial hours and days every week. ***With a report from Norman Bordadora***

Internet gets . . .

(From page A1)

potential to proclaim the Gospel message," said the Pope in "Internet: A New Forum for Proclaiming the Gospel."

"This challenge is at the heart of what it means at the beginning of the millennium to follow the Lord's command to 'put out into the deep'."

But the 81-year-old Pontiff also warned of the dangers that the Web posed, including its ability to spread "degrading and damaging" material.

In addition, Internet users could come away from the endless reams of online information thinking that facts matter more than values, he said. And the immediacy of Internet information could diminish the desire for deeper thought and reflection.

"Understanding and wisdom are the fruit of a contemplative eye upon the world, and do not come from a mere accumulation of facts, no matter how interesting," he said.

The Pope also warned of the worsening technology gap between rich and poor and said true evangelization required human contact, not just electronic relationships.

Vatican goes hi-tech

In his 23-year papacy, the Pope has avidly used the media to get his message out and has presided over a technological revolution at the Vatican, including the 1995 start of its website.

In November, he sent his first official message online—an apology for missionary abuses against indigenous peoples of the South Pacific.

"How can we ensure that this wondrous instrument first conceived in the context of military operations can now serve the cause of peace?" the Pontiff asked.

"Can it favor the cause of dialogue, participation, solidarity and reconciliation without which peace cannot flourish? The Church believes it can, and to ensure that this is what will happen she is determined to enter this new forum, armed with the gospel of Christ, the Prince of Peace."

The message was intended to highlight issues for the Church's celebration of World Communications Day on May 12.

Supplement, not replacement

"The Internet can offer magnificent opportunities for evangelization if used with competence and a clear awareness of its strengths and weaknesses," the Pope said.

Even if it could never replace the experience of God, which only liturgical and sacramental life could provide, the Internet could offer a unique supplement.

Another strength was its ability to stir interest and make possible an initial encounter with the Christian message, particularly for the young.

The Church's challenge was to ensure that the information revolution would work in favor of the globalization of human development and solidarity, he said.

The Renaissance and the invention of printing, the Industrial Revolution and the birth of the modern world were each threshold moments, and the new communications revolution provided the Church with a "decisive gateway," the Pope added.

"The fact that through the Internet people multiply their contacts in ways hitherto unthinkable opens up wonderful possibilities for spreading the Gospel," said the Pontiff. ***AFP, AP***

Macapagal wins bipartisan support for war games

(From page A1)

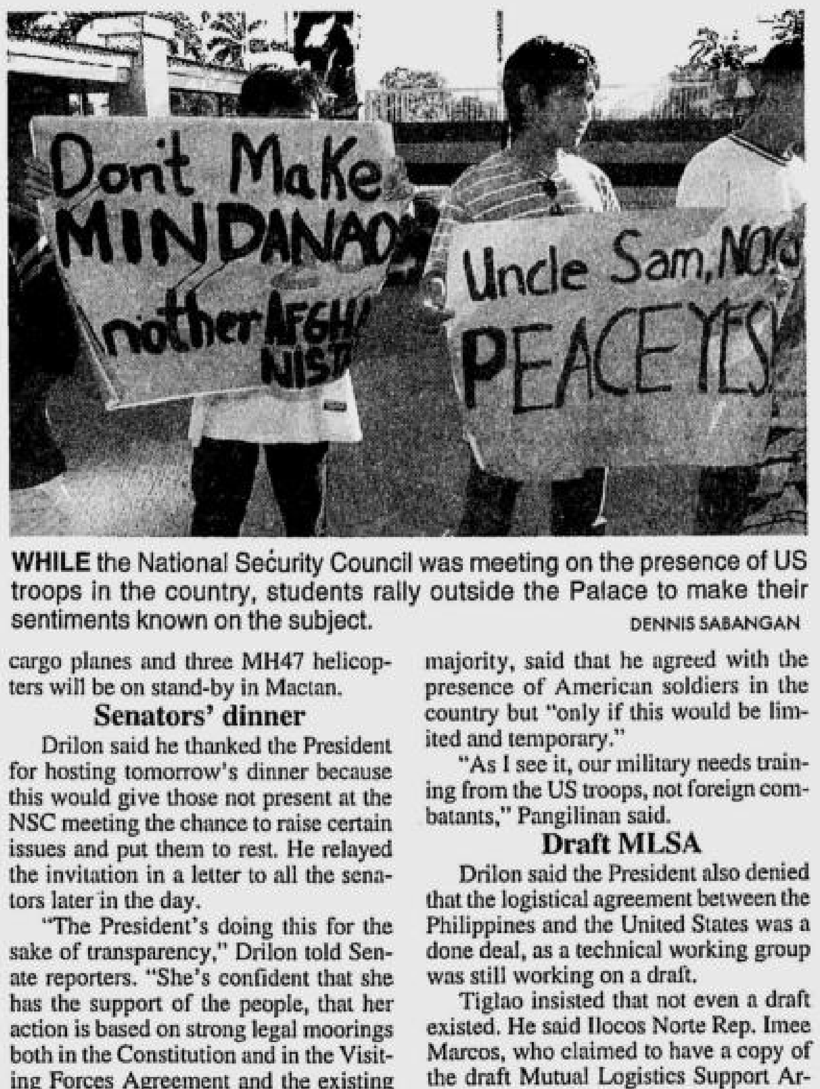
reported to be on the verge of resigning, accepted the opinion of the Department of Justice that Ms Macapagal had "valid authority" to proceed with the exercises. ***(See related story.)***

The President will likely use the dinner she is hosting for all senators tomorrow to cement support for the training exercises.

"The President is happy that there is a consensus," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

Golez said the NSC was informed the exercises enjoyed "overwhelming public support" and fell within the bounds of the bilateral Visiting Forces Agreement of 1999, which governs the conduct of US military forces in the country.

He also said the exercise would be held "in utmost transparency." A presidential human rights committee will be set up on Basilan island, where some 160 US Special Forces will be deployed and where the Abu Sayyaf bandit group remains at large, to receive any complaints.



WHILE the National Security Council was meeting on the presence of US troops in the country, students rally outside the Palace to make their sentiments known on the subject. DENNIS SABANGAN

American trainers

In an interview with Japan's NHK television network yesterday, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said the United States was sending "American trainers to work alongside the Philippine army and to see if we can help them do a better job of dealing with their problem."

"Their problem—terrorism inside the Philippines—threatens Philippine citizens, but also American citizens or other citizens who might be tourists . . . and we are missing two citizens at the moment, and we want to get our citizens back," Powell said. "We want to help the Philippine government defeat this kind of terrorism."

On the same day, 14 American troops, led by US Air Force Capt. Allan Mitzel, arrived at the Mactan Benito Ebuen Air Base (MBEAB) to inspect the facilities, said Capt. Enrico Canaya, spokesperson of the Tactical Operation Command. The air base will be utilized as a maintenance base for US aircraft participating in the military exercises.

The Americans were escorted to the different facilities in the MBEAB, where they inquired about the availability of communication facilities, among others, Canaya said.

"They are planning to stay here for quite a long time," he added.

At least 200 US soldiers are expected to be assigned to the MBEAB to act as support crew for the Special Forces units participating in the Balikatan exercises.

A US Air Force plane will arrive this week with more US personnel. They will assist Mitzel's team in preparing the airbase for the exercises, Canaya said. The preparation stage will last from two to four weeks.

Canaya said the 200-man support crew would consist mostly of specialists in aircraft maintenance. Three US C-130 cargo planes and three MH47 helicopters will be on stand-by in Mactan.

Senators' dinner

Drilon said he thanked the President for hosting tomorrow's dinner because this would give those not present at the NSC meeting the chance to raise certain issues and put them to rest. He relayed the invitation in a letter to all the senators later in the day.

"The President's doing this for the sake of transparency," Drilon told Senate reporters. "She's confident that she has the support of the people, that her action is based on strong legal moorings both in the Constitution and in the Visiting Forces Agreement and the existing United Nations treaties and treaty obligations of the Philippines," he added.

Drilon said that the President made it clear that the actual fighting against the Abu Sayyaf and the rescue of the American couple from their Abu Sayyaf captors would be carried out by Filipino troops.

He said this position was conveyed repeatedly by the President when she met US President George W. Bush in Washington last year in the presence of some senators, including Pimentel.

"The American troops will not be fighting side by side with Philippine troops. The American trainors will be behind, providing training," he said.

Accordingly, two American trainers will be assigned to every 125 Filipino soldiers (roughly one company), during the six-month exercise which starts next month.

Senators present at the NSC meeting included Senators Rodolfo Biazon, Loren Legarda, Robert Barbers and Ramon Magsaysay.

Administration Sen. Ralph Recto welcomed the dinner invitation.

"We all hope to be more enlightened on the parameters that would govern the stay of US troops in Mindanao," Recto said.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan, also of the majority, said that he agreed with the presence of American soldiers in the country but "only if this would be limited and temporary."

"As I see it, our military needs training from the US troops, not foreign combatants," Pangilinan said.

Draft MLSA

Drilon said the President also denied that the logistical agreement between the Philippines and the United States was a done deal, as a technical working group was still working on a draft.

Tiglao insisted that not even a draft existed. He said Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, who claimed to have a copy of the draft Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement, must be holding a fake document.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said the public should have no qualms about the proposed MLSA, because the DOJ would make sure that the document would be consistent with the Constitution and existing laws.

He said the DOJ members of the technical working group were acting as the main critics regarding constitutionality and legality.

"We are blocking provisions that would be against the Constitution and existing laws," Perez said.

He added that the MLSA had yet to be signed, contrary to the pronouncements of Marcos. "We do not know where she got the supposedly signed copies. We don't even know if the MLSA she had been distributing in the House is the same draft that we are looking into."

Despite the emerging consensus to support the military exercise, the Senate will push through with a scheduled public hearing on the US presence at 8:30 a.m. today.

Drilon said the Senate hearing was meant to hear the views of all sectors on the issue, particularly from the government side.

Invited to the hearing were Guingona, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, Golez, Perez, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, former Senate President Jovito Salonga and ex-Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

Magsaysay, chair of the committee on defense and national security which will preside the hearing, denied that Malacañang has requested administration senators to go easy on the issue.

Continuing opposition

But the war games continued to draw flak from militant groups. Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran said the deployment of US troops, instead of scaring away terrorists, would make the country a magnet for terrorist attacks.

Beltran accused the Macapagal administration of compromising the country's security and fomenting civil unrest by continuing to justify the joint RP-US military exercises in rebel areas in Mindanao despite what he called mounting opposition.

"It's the presence of the American troops that's making the country's security problems even worse," Beltran said. "With the Americans here, the Philippines is an even bigger target for terrorists."

"There's also the dangerous potential for civil war. The country is turning into a giant powder keg that could go off at any possible time—what with the threats of a civilian military junta, the rising criminality, the growing social unrest and now the presence of foreign troops," he said.

As the NSC conducted its meeting in the presidential palace, several dozen students protesting the American military presence tried to storm the palace gates but were driven back by riot police armed with batons and shields.

Policemen attacked the university students with clubs shortly after they began an unauthorized street protest at the gates of Malacañang. The students were chased all the way to an intersection about half a kilometer away. There were no arrests and none of the protesters appeared to be seriously injured.

"We were going to leave peacefully but they continued to hit us with their shields. The purpose of our protest was peaceful," said Cristina Palabay, head of the National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP).

After slipping past the security cordon at Mendiola Bridge and the sentry gate, Palabay and her colleagues ran towards Malacañang's Gate 7, shouting "*Gloria tuta ng Kano* (Gloria, the Americans' lapdog)."

The regular police detail in the area then grabbed shields and batons, and pushed back the protesters outside the Palace sentry gate.

Once outside the sentry gate, the protesters continued to chant anti-government slogans, and burned an effigy of US President Bush embracing President Macapagal-Arroyo. ***With reports from Rocky Nazareno, Norman Bordadora, Dona Pazzibugan, Gerald Lacuarta, Philip Tubeza, Jhunnex Napallacan of the PDI Visayas Bureau and AFP***

Good, clean fun . . .

(From page A1)

Arroyo has ordered the military to come up with strict guidelines concerning the rest and recreation of American military forces taking part in the RP-US war games.

She wants group dates and guided tours, not solo flights, her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said yesterday. She wants the spotlight on tourist destinations, not on honky-tonks.

"The President has emphasized again and again that the presence of US troops will not start prostitution activities," Tiglao told reporters.

He said the members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines had been directed to make clear to their American counterparts that the government did not want the incidence of prostitution to rise on account of the US presence.

"One proposal is for US troops to go out of their barracks in groups and as part of guided tours," Tiglao said. "Going out alone will not be allowed."

He said the tour guides could either be AFP personnel themselves or people from the Department of Tourism, "so the Americans may be encouraged to see tourist spots and not go to bars."

Asked whether the Americans would be explicitly barred from the bars, Tiglao said: "The guidelines are still being finalized. We'll know exact details soon."

"This is a concern of the AFP and their US counterparts," he added.

According to an earlier report in the INQUIRER, bar girls in Zamboanga City are looking forward to the arrival of the Americans.

Their anticipation is in terms of not only the dollars to be earned but also the wish to bag an American lover or husband, or to produce an Amerasian child.

Easier to control

Tiglao said the composition of the expected 660 US troops "could make it easier to control them." He described them as "not ordinary soldiers," but mostly members of the elite US Special Forces.

Of the 660 Americans, 44 are already in Zamboanga City. That number is due to rise to 100 today.

Tiglao said some 160 Americans would be deployed in Basilan, where eight Filipino military battalions are going after the Abu Sayyaf. As many as 140 will be assigned in the Malagutay area in Zamboanga to train two Light Reaction Companies.

Some 160 will stay at the AFP Southern Command headquarters in Zamboanga to oversee logistics and communication and related missions.

The biggest group, comprising 250, will be assigned at the Air Force base in Mactan, Cebu, where air strikes will be mapped out.

Guingona gives way to GMA on US troops' entry

(From page A1)

"The President wanted us to speak with one voice—that's why we held the NSC meeting to resolve the issue once and for all," he said. "She did not want us arguing. She wanted us to stand united. So I will not resign."

Guingona had earlier said that the extended stay of US troops was clearly in violation of the Constitution. In an apparent effort to spare the Vice President from having to eat his words, the DOJ issued the opinion that it is the President who should sign the approval of the Balikatan.

Under the law, all military exercises under the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) have to be approved by the Council of Foreign Ministers, of which Guingona and US Secretary of State Colin Powell are members.

But with the DOJ opinion, Guingona no longer has the say on whether US troops can be allowed to stay beyond what the VFA prescribes: "only short visits not lasting more than four weeks."

"The DOJ is of the opinion that the President, as the chief architect of foreign policy, can approve this exercise under the VFA," said National Security Adviser Roilo Golez.

The Vice President said that "regardless of my feelings and position, I respect the DOJ's advice that the President can sign and approve the extended stay of American troops for as long as one year."

Asked if he was happy about the compromise, he said: "While I was given the chance to voice my sentiments, my feelings and opinions are irrelevant.

"It has been resolved. The DOJ said the President could sign the approval. And the President approved it. How can I argue with that?"

TV reports said leaders of the ruling Lakas-NUCD had also prevailed on Guingona to keep it united vis-à-vis the issue that threatened to tear apart not only the party but also the Cabinet. But former President Fidel V. Ramos, arriving yesterday from abroad, insisted that Guingona had made the decision himself.

'So be it'

Guingona, however, did not categorically say he supported the President's plan to allow 660 US troops to help the Philippine military crush the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

In a statement read for him by her presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao, Guingona said: "The President's legal advisers and Justice Secretary (Hernando Perez) affirm the legality and the constitutionality of Balikatan 02-1. So be it."

Tiglao took the statement to mean that Guingona "will support (the Balikatan exercise) as long as the justice secretary and the legal advisers affirm it."

Guingona's position is that the planned deployment of US troops is illegal because it is not allowed under the 1951 RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) or the 1999 VFA.

But during yesterday's crucial meeting of the NSC, Guingona did not find an ally, not even from the opposition.

Based on the "consensus" reached, there will be no reduction in the planned number of 660 US soldiers.

But the exercise will not go beyond six months, although defense and military officials earlier said it might last between six months and one year.

In the opinion of Perez, Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida and the President's legal counsel Avelino Cruz, the VFA can provide the "legal framework" for the Balikatan.

ROGER MARGALLO

ABSENT from the National Security Council, former President Fidel Ramos just planed in on Wednesday from Oman where he addressed the international forum of the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Tiglao also pointed out that Guingona's consent was no longer required because the President would sign the approval papers.

The foreign secretary normally signs the approval because he heads the Mutual Defense Board, which implements the MDT. Past joint military exercises were conducted under the MDT. The VFA only provides for the legal status of visiting US soldiers while in the country.

Asked about this, Tiglao said even Sen. Blas Ople, chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, was in support of the Balikatan.

"He (Ople) said we should not lose sight of the purpose by arguing over legal fine points," Tiglao said.

It was not clear if Guingona would still oversee the conduct of the Balikatan in his capacity as co-chair of the VFA Commission, which monitors all joint military exercises.

'No choice'

In saying that he respected the DOJ opinion, Guingona said the department "made a thorough study *daw* (allegedly)."

But he immediately corrected himself and said: "The DOJ made a thorough study. Period. *Walang* (No) *'daw.'*"

According to Guingona, he had "no choice" but to yield to the DOJ opinion because Perez has the final say on legal issues. "I used to be justice secretary, and the justice secretary is the official adviser of the President," he noted.

Guingona said that after the NSC meeting, the President said she did not want her Cabinet to continue arguing over the Balikatan.

He likened the situation to a marriage wherein the couple might be arguing but continuing to stay married.

Asked if it followed that by deciding to respect the DOJ opinion, he would henceforth stop airing his opposition to the US presence, Guingona said: "It's like the song, '*Que sera sera*,' what will be, will be."

Tiglao described the NSC meeting as "very cordial." He said the President was "happy" about the "consensus" on the Balikatan.

Golez said Guingona was smiling throughout the meeting, and had resumed sitting at the President's right.

Guingona sat opposite the President during the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday—the first time he did so.

Golez said all members of Congress present at the NSC meeting "fully supported" the Balikatan. Former President Corazon Aquino, who sat at the left of Ms Macapagal, raised no objection.

The other legislators present were Senate President Franklin Drilon, Majority and Minority Leaders Loren Legarda and Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Senators Robert Barbers and Rodolfo Biazon, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzales, House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla, and Representatives Gerry Salapuddin, Apolinario Lozada, Emilio Espinosa, Manuel Pichay and Neptali Gonzales III.

Social components

As though to appease critics, the President introduced two "social components"—Task Force Gentle Wind, supposedly to oversee "economic assistance" to Basilan during the Balikatan; and the Presidential Human Rights Committee, which is to set up base in that province.

The President said she would ask the US government to support the task force, which would be headed by a mid-level official of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

While the NSC meeting was ongoing, the US Embassy in Manila issued a statement from Powell justifying the Balikatan.

The statement read: "Well, in reality the (Filipino) people have been fighting against terrorism, and they have some terrible organizations in the Philippines that kidnap people, that threaten Filipinos, and so as we expand our campaign against terrorism, we want to offer support to nations who are fighting terrorists in their land.

"And in this case, in cooperation with the Philippine government and with the permission of the President, we are sending in American trainers to work alongside the Philippine Army and to see if we can help them do a better job of dealing with their problem.

"Their problem, terrorism inside the Philippines, threatens Filipino citizens but also American citizens or other citizens who might be tourists or traveling in the Philippines, and we are missing two citizens at the moment and we want to get our citizens back. We want to help the Philippine government defeat this kind of terrorism."

Aquino

Contrary to speculation that the President had asked Aquino to convince Guingona to change his stance on the US presence, no such conversation took place.

Aquino's spokesperson Lourdes Siytangco yesterday denied that the former President had met with Guingona.

Siytangco told the INQUIRER that the last time Aquino and Guingona talked was over the phone Monday night.

"Vice President Guingona called Ms Aquino on the phone to greet her happy birthday in advance. That was all. They did not discuss anything political," Siytangco said, adding:

"They are friends, so it's natural that they call and greet each other on special occasions. Then they met each other during the (NSC) meeting."

Siytangco also said Aquino was reserving comment regarding the Balikatan and the reported signing of the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement. ***With a report from Norman Bordadora***

US troops boost stock market

(From page A1)

performers in 2001 when it dropped 21 percent.

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said the worst was over for local stocks.

"This is a liquidity-driven rally led by foreign funds. The problem is that many funds have zero exposure in the Philippines and if they bring back only 10 percent of what they put before 1997, it will really benefit us," Roxas said.

He wished that trading hours were longer so that brokerage houses could take advantage of the trading momentum.

Analysts said local stocks might finally be on the road to recovery after being battered by the BW inside trading scandal, domestic political upheavals, global economic slowdown and the terrorist attacks in Mindanao and in the United States.

"I think this rally will continue," Roxas said.

Investors snapped up blue chips such as SM Prime Holdings Inc., which rose 4.55 percent to close at P6.90. It was the most actively traded stock.

Other index gainers were Aboitiz Equity Ventures, which rose 7.59 percent to P1.70; Equitable PCI Bank, 7.27 percent to P29.50; Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., 7.14 percent to P525; Meralco B, 5.88 percent to P38 and ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., 5.36 percent to P29.50.

Villaroman said a bull market depended on whether the US economy had bottomed out.

He noted that the expected bottoming out of the US economy was between the second quarter and the fourth quarter of this year.

Almost all sectors gained yesterday, led by the commercial-industrial index, which rose 2.98 percent and the property and banking issues, which surged 2.97 percent and 2.42 percent, respectively.

In its daily report, ATR Kim Eng Securities said investors' appetite for local equity increased as political risks were diminishing and economic prospects improving.

Stock market portal 2tradeasia.com said the momentum that the market exhibited yesterday could lead to further gains.

It said the optimism partly stemmed from an expected low inflation this month and the possible slashing of key overnight rates.

"In case 1,350 is penetrated, the Phisix will likely re-test, moving past 1,362. If this level is achieved, we expect consolidation within 1,340-1,360 to support ascents nearer 1,400," it said.

"For investors that were lucky to accumulate stocks prior to the run-up and have already pocketed gains, it would be prudent to consult technical exit targets for selected large-cap stocks that are already trading near historical highs," it said.

"Meanwhile, attention is likely to shift toward second- and third-tier issues that normally follow the trail established by larger counterparts, specifically within property and financial counters," it added. ***With reports from Reuters and AFP***

PNP spooks sure of Indon's links to terror group

(From page A1)

not involved in terrorist activities when he has not seen him since 1997? He should tell that to the Singaporean authorities," Delfin said in a phone interview.

Delfin was reacting to M. Zainuri, a council member of the Madium district of East Java province, who was quoted as saying that he did not believe that his son had been involved in terrorist acts.

Zainuri, however, had admitted that he had rarely met Al-Ghozi since he left home and studied at an Islamic boarding school in Central Java province in 1997.

While Delfin appeared certain that Al-Ghozi was a terrorist, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez told reporters an investigation was underway to verify Al Ghozi's alleged link to foreign terror groups.

"This is a matter of possible international terrorism," Golez said, refusing to give other details.

Based on a tip provided by Singaporean authorities, intelligence agents arrested Al-Ghozi in Quiapo, Manila, on the morning of Jan. 15, hours before he was set to fly to Bangkok.

Al-Ghozi's arrest led to the seizure of a ton of TNT and 17 M-16s, and the arrest of three Filipino associates during a raid on his rented home in General Santos City two days later.

Delfin also said that Al-Ghozi himself had admitted participation in the bomb explosions in Metro Manila on Dec. 30, 2000, which killed 18 people and injured more than a hundred others.

"He made the admission without any pressure," the intelligence official said. Delfin noted that Al-Ghozi made the confession while he and three Filipino cohorts were about to be brought to the justice department for inquest on charges of possession of explosives and arms.

Al-Ghozi had provided funding and bomb components to a suspect for the bombings in 2000, police said.

Police are still tracking down the other two Indonesians who lived with Al-Ghozi and their Filipino associates in General Santos City, according to Chief Supt. Ruben Caringal of IG.

Caringal declined to say if the Indonesians, who were identified as Tau Pic and Hassan, were still in the country. The two had escaped prior to the police raid on Al-Ghozi's home in General Santos City.

The Police Regional Office in Western Visayas (PRO-6) has ordered its units to be on alert following the arrest of three suspected terrorists in General Santos City.

In Jakarta, an Indonesian foreign ministry spokesperson said an Indonesian arrested in the Philippines for suspected links to the al-Qaida network had five passports under different names.

"The two were issued in Indonesia and the three others in the Philippines," Wahid Supriyadi told Agence France Presse.

Al-Ghozi's current nationality remains in question because Indonesia does not recognize dual nationality, according to Wahid.

Supriyadi said the Indonesian Embassy in Manila was trying to get access to Al-Ghozi. "We want to interview him because we need direct information from him," he said.

Two Indonesian police officers left Wednesday for the Philippines to gather information on Al-Ghozi.

"The team's length of stay will depend on the amount of work they have to face in investigating Fathur's case," said national police spokesperson Inspector Gen. Saleh Saaf.

Police in Jakarta have confirmed that Al-Ghozi was Indonesian-born. ***With reports from Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau, and AFP and AP***

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BUSAN GAMES

POC sets Asiad qualifying norms

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee has set the wheels in motion for the country's preparations for the 2002 Busan Asian Games by announcing the participation guidelines.

"We have come up with a stringent set of guidelines to ensure a more meaningful participation (in the Busan Asian Games)," POC president Celso L. Dayrit said yesterday after meeting with Task Force chair Tom Carrasco and members Ernie Fajardo and Nestor Ilagan.

Among the qualifying standards approved by the POC are:

Gold medal finish in the 2001 SEA Games, gold medal finish in equivalent SEA level competition between 2001 and August 2002, recent performance (for measurable sports) equivalent to the minimum third-place record in the 1998 Bangkok Asian Games and bronze medal finish in IF (international federation) sanctioned world competition.

The POC is ready to meet with various NSAs (national sports associations) to discuss their needs as well as their potential athletes.

The POC, Dayrit added, is requesting the Philippine Sports Commission to continue accommodating the requests (for support) of all NSAs "because the athletes have to continue training not only for the Asian Games but also for future international events like the 2003 and 2005 SEA Games.

Dayrit clarifies report

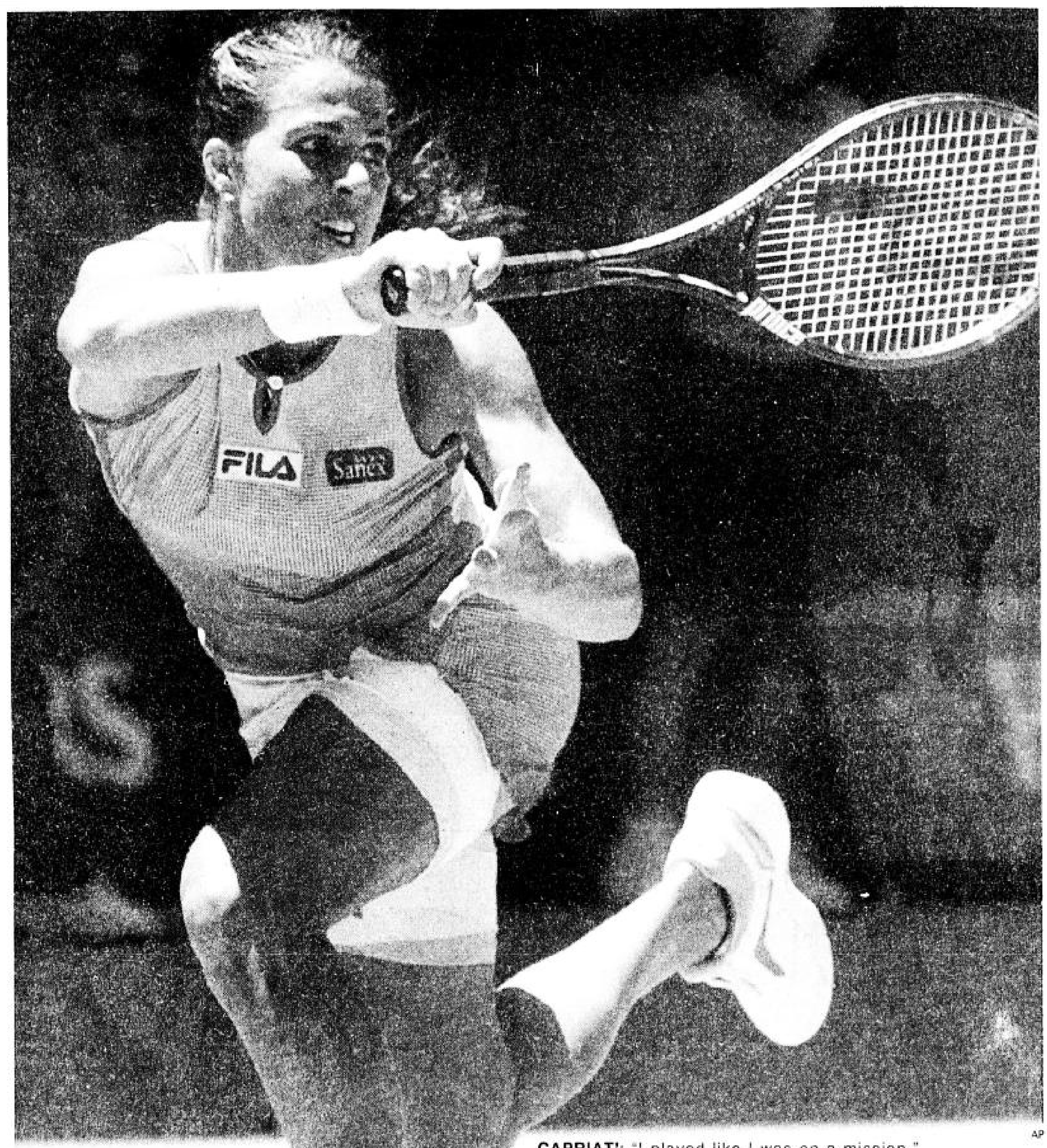
PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee president Celso L. Dayrit yesterday denied telling Inquirer sportswriter Marc Anthony Reyes that PSC chair Carlos D. Tuason "was a victim of politics which is slowly killing Philippine sports."

"Marc asked me if Tuason's resignation would affect Philippine participation in the Asian Games. I told him no. That's all. I did not discuss with him anything about "politics", Dayrit said in reaction to Reyes' article which came out in the Inquirer yesterday.

The POC head also denied telling Reyes that the Task Force for the Asian Games would have to wait for the appointment of a new chair before it could start preparations for the Busan Games.

"I also did not tell him that," said Dayrit. "In fact, the Task Force has already prepared the guidelines for the country's Asian Games participation. We (the POC) have already started moving because we only have around eight months to prepare our team."

DAYRIT



AP

CAPRIATI: "I played like I was on a mission."

Capriati, Clijsters forge semis duel

MELBOURNE, Australia—Women's defending champion Jennifer Capriati had to play her best tennis. New men's favorite Marat Safin practically had a day off.

Both advanced to the Australian Open semifinals as Capriati beat Amelie Mauresmo 6-2, 6-2 Wednesday, and Wayne Ferreira retired from his match against Safin with an abdominal strain.

Capriati next meets Kim Clijsters, a 6-2, 6-3 winner over Justine Henin. Capriati was extended to 12-10 in the final set before beating Clijsters for last year's French Open title.

Safin, the 2000 U.S. Open champion, was awaiting the winner of a night match between seventh-seeded Tommy Haas and former No. 1 Marcelo Rios.

Capriati lost the first two points before breaking Mauresmo's serve in the first game. Then, in two games in the first set and one in the second, she saved a total of six break points.

She had help from occasional wild play by Mauresmo, who squandered a 40-0 lead in the third game of the second set with three consecutive double faults. Mauresmo had 34 unforced errors to Capriati's 20.

"I played like I was on a mission," Capriati said, likening her effort to last year's when she won this tournament.

"There was nothing for her to do except try to up her game. A few times I was put on the defense, but because I was playing well I was able to get out of those situations," she added.

After a promising debut as a 14-year-old in 1990 and then a series of personal problems, Capriati finally won her first major tournament title at last year's Australian Open. She followed that with the French Open title and reached the semifinals at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open.

"It feels like I've graduated to the next level," Capriati said. "I feel a lot better this year."

Looking ahead to Clijsters, Capriati said, "I've had maybe some tough matches, but I feel pretty fresh myself so hopefully I'll come out strong and play like I did today."

Safin, meanwhile, was happy that "I can save my energy for the semifinal."

He was on court just 28 minutes, and was leading 5-2 when Ferreira stopped.

The Russian, who eliminated 13-time Grand Slam tournament winner Pete Sampras in the fourth round, said, "That was a great match. I deserved to win. Today was a present." *AP*

CSB wins anew

GAMES TODAY
(Rizal Coliseum)
8 a.m.—Adamson vs AMACC (Srs.)
9:30 a.m.—La Salle vs UST (Jrs.)
11 a.m.—St. Jude vs NU (Srs.)
12:30 p.m.—AMACU vs LPC (Srs.)

COLLEGE of St. Benilde rolled to its fourth straight win at the expense of Adamson, 63-58, yesterday in the National Capital Region eliminations of the 56th National Students Basketball Championships at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Jondan Salvador scored 20 points and Sunday Salvacion chipped in 16 as the Blazers handed the Falcons their second loss in three outings.

Christian Ferrer finished with 10 points, including a short jumper that tied the count at 54-all going into the final three minutes.

Salvacion's three-point play and Jan Anthony Coching's free throws put St. Benilde ahead at 61-56, 50 seconds left.

Adamson made it 58-61 on Ramil Tagupa's charities before Mark Magsumbol sank two gift shots for the final tally.

In other results, University of Perpetual Help-Rizal downed Trinity, 86-82 and Mapua Institute of Technology demolished St. Dominic Sabio College, 94-60.

In the juniors division, Adamson boosted its quarterfinal bid with a 76-74 victory over St. Claire.

The Baby Falcons won their second straight game after a 65-56 decision over the Mapua Red Robins last Tuesday.

$4.6-B TV deal for NBA

NEW YORK—The NBA's new six-year, $4.6 billion television deals with ABC, ESPN and TNT were completed Tuesday, shifting nearly all of the league's games to cable.

The deals are worth $765 million a year, a 25-percent increase from the $615 million the league made annually in TV rights under the four-year, $2.46 billion deals with NBC and Turner Sports that expire after this season. *AP*

Nat'l cagers seek MBA appearance

By Roy Luarca

THE NATIONAL amateur training pool may yet see action in the MBA as a guest team this season.

Talks have been ongoing between the MBA, through commissioner Chito Loyzaga and business and marketing director Ramon Tuason, and the Basketball Association of the Philippines, through secretary general Graham Lim and treasurer Christian Tan, regarding the parameters with which the Nationals could be accommodated in this year's three conferences.

Led by members of the Philippine Young Men's team, the Nationals wanted to compete in the MBA as part of their preparations for the Jones Cup, Southeast Asian Basketball Association, Southeast Asian Games and other international competitions sanctioned by the Fiba (International Amateur Basketball Federation).

"Of course, we'd be happy to have them (Nationals) in the MBA. Our thrust is grassroots development and we'd like to be of help in developing talents," said Tuason. "If they can meet the guidelines to be set by the Multi-Regional Basketball Inc., then I foresee no problems."

The Nationals, who've been training under coaches Johnny Tam and Ching Marcelino, are to be supported by Mail & More.

Making up the core of the Nationals are Jean Marc Pingris and Ranidel de Ocampo, both 6-foot-6, MC Caceres (6-4), Archer Calacar (6-2), Mark Magsumbol (6-2) and Elvis Tolentino (5-10).

The Philippine Sports Commission allows an 18-man national training pool for basketball, which should erase concerns for an incomplete roster once the school leagues get going.

Because of their minimal budget, the Nationals have also requested the MBA to schedule all their games in Luzon.

Bong, Noli want 80 percent buyout

By June Navarro

FORMER Tanduay stars Bong Hawkins and Noli Locsin are asking an 80-percent buyout of their contracts even as the PBA urged teams to declare side contracts to avoid future complications.

Danny Espiritu, Hawkins and Locsin's agent, said an arbitration to be presided by the PBA Commissioner's Office was forthcoming if their demands were not met.

At the same time, the Commissioner's Office has set the deadline for the submission of the players' contracts for scrutiny on March 1 along with the side deals included in the course of negotiations.

Federal Express, which bought Tanduay's franchise for P75 million, offered a 50-percent buyout of Locsin and Hawkins' three-year contracts while disregarding the side deals the players had made with the Lucio Tan firm.

"Any counter-proposal lower than the 80 percent buyout entails the need for Commissioner (Jun) Bernardino to mediate," Espiritu told the INQUIRER.

Espiritu remained steadfast on going after Tanduay with respect to the players' side contracts after the buyout issue.

Miami turns up heat on Bulls

MIAMI—Rod Strickland scored 20 points and moved into seventh place on the NBA's career assist list Tuesday as the Miami Heat extended their winning streak to six games with a 92-79 victory over the Chicago Bulls.

Eddie Jones also scored 20 points for the Heat, whose winning streak is their longest since a seven-game run during the 1999-2000 season. The Heat won for the ninth time in 11 games.

COMPLETE RESULTS

Miami 92, Bulls 79; Magic 100, Hawks 86; Suns 92, Bucks 81; 76ers 91, Wizards 84; Mavericks 113, Rockets 107; Nets 92, Spurs 86; Nuggets 107, Lakers 91; Trail Blazers 116, Kings 110, OT. *AP*

Lopez favored

KAY Lopez, ranked No. 4 junior in the 2001 Asia Cup series and junior silver medalist in the Singapore International Triathlon, is a marked lady in the National Triathlon Trials 2002 and 3rd Inter-Club Triathlon Championship (The Iloilo Challenge) slated in Iloilo City Jan. 26.

Reigning titlist Popo Nagtalon, along with co-national pool members Ani Karina de Leon and Lakambini Alto, leads the challengers to Lopez in the competition presented by Rexona, Toyota and Pagcor as a side event of the Dinagyang Festival 2002.

National Age-Group Triathlon 2001 champion Amale Mendezona-Jopson and runner-up Astrud Valdez, the 16-year-old wonder from Imus, Cavite, are also all-out to enhance their prestige in the race with Negros Navigation, Italit, Pioneer and Boysen Paints as major sponsors.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Brilliant Leader 2. Inside Treasure 3. Hinobaan Boy 4. Aringkingking

Race 2—1. Precious Stone 2. Dot Com 3. Shooting Star 4. Mr. Speaker 5. Mr. Nobility

Race 3—1. Jessie James 2. Celebration 3. Cherry Lane

Race 4—1. Slew's Valentine 2. Talk to Patsy 3. Diva 4. Very Sharp 5. Baby My Beloved

Race 5—1. Kingair 2. Battle Tested 3. House Conquest 4. Pefect Gift

Race 6—1. Flying Fortress 2. El Bulldog 3. Southern Glory 4. C'est Magnifique

Race 7—1. Kathy Rose 2. Carlo's Charm 3. Silver Print 4. Zip On 5. Hitman

Race 8—1. Ebony Starr 2. Knows Love 3. Serendipity 4. Seiko Shita 5. Majestic Ruler

Race 9—1. Daseldurf 2. High and Mighty 3. Cash on Delivery 4. Freshman 5. Uzisaki 6.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

TENNIS: Australian Open at 8 a.m. on Sky Cable 29 and Home Cable 17

Hopman Cup 2002 - USA vs Belgium at 9 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Maryland vs Wake Forest at 1 p.m. on ESPN

NBA – New York Knicks vs Toronto Raptors at 10 p.m. on NBN 4

POOL: Mosconi Cup 2001 at 8 a.m. (r) on ESPN

Rack 'Em Up - St Andrews Cup Finals at 7 p.m. on ESPN

Moses breaks records

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—American Ed Moses broke world short-course records in the 50- and 200-meter breaststroke Tuesday, and Geoff Huegill tied the world 50 butterfly mark at a World Cup meet. *AP*.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Far Eastern University beat University of Santo Tomas, 65-63, to rule the collegiate Milo BEST Center's 2nd Women's Basketball League at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. Also today in 1994, Mario Castro clocked 1 hour, eight minutes and 36 seconds to claim his fourth successive Puma Half-Marathon crown at the Quirino Grandstand.

Asian Games preparation . . .

(From page A16)

September Asian Games in Busan, South Korea.

"That is my immediate aim," said Buhain. "We will have to prepare hard for it. My long-term goal is to achieve an organizational and athletic success in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games."

Buhain said he was not bothered by the reported controversies that continually hound the PSC.

"I think it's better to treat intrigues as mere obstacles that get in the way in the pursuit of our goals," said Buhain. "The important part is, we don't lose sight of our goal no matter what."

Buhain put up a swimming school after he retired from the pool 10 years ago.

"I know the sacrifices that athletes have to undergo because I was one of them," said Buhain, who is married to Batangas Rep. Aileen Ermita-Buhain, daughter of retired Gen. Eduardo Ermita. Ermita is Ms Macapagal's chief adviser on national security.

Buhain said he is in good terms with the Alliance of Athletes and Coaches of the Philippines headed by Jimmy Sebastian.

"He (Sebastian) knows where to get in touch with me anytime, anywhere," Buhain said.

With regard to the PSC's master plan for sports, Buhain said much of the country's sports development program has been set up already.

"All we need to do is implementation," he said. "Like the case of Batang Pinoy. It's a very good program, but we still need follow-up projects for the kids who excel there. There must be a program for athletes 12-years and older so kids can look forward to something after Batang Pinoy."

With a report from Carlito Pablo

Ladies interclub begins at Baguio Country Club

BAGUIO CITY—The 27th Baguio Ladies Golf Interclub starts today at the well-maintained par-61 Baguio Country Club.

The nippy weather in the City of Pines will come into play as the nation's top lady parbusters hunt for top honors in Classes A, B, and C in this three-day tournament sponsored by Smart Communications, Inc.

"The ladies are back. BCC once again is honored to host this annual golf tournament," said BCC deputy general manager Anthony de Leon.

Defending champion Aguinaldo Golf Club is the team to beat in the premiere Class A division. Aguinaldo is gunning for its sixth straight title since 1997.

Barbie Cruz, last year's overall individual titlist (113 points), will banner Aguinaldo.

She will be supported by Artie Mediana, Belen Ampong, Matet Salivio, Grace Atienza, Lily Ching, Bernie Paras and Malou Belandres, the team skipper.

Host BCC and Villamor, last year's 1st and 2nd runners-up, respectively, and Sta. Elena are aching to Aguinaldo a tough fight.

Norma Lawrence and Liza Smit, who spearhead BCC's titles in Classes B and C, respectively, are expected to lead their teams anew.

Other noted golf clubs participating in the tournament using the Stableford scoring format are Alabang, Capitol Hills, Philippine Navy, Riviera, Baguio Ladies Golf Association (BLOGA) and John Hay.

Welcoat, ICTSI gun for final slots in PBL Challenge today

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Shark vs ICTSI-La Salle
5:30 p.m.—Welcoat Paints vs Kutitap

By Dennis U. Eroa

BEMEDALLED Welcoat Paints and ICTSI-La Salle shoot for final slots as they clash with similar dangerous opponents today in the PBL Challenge Cup crossover semifinals at the Makati Coliseum.

The Paintmasters, hot on the trail of their fifth PBL title, test the mettle of the Kutitap Toothpaste Sparklers at 5:30 p.m. after the 3:30 opener between the Green Archers and the Energy Drink Kings.

Welcoat and ICTSI-La Salle must beat their respective foes just once in order to arrange a title showdown. To prevent a Welcoat-ICTSI party, Kutitap and Shark face the tall odds of beating their foes twice in order to advance.

"I regard this encounter as Game One of a best-of-three title series," said Shark mentor Leo Austria. "We need two wins to make it."

Shark and ICTSI split their elimination matches, but Austria's charges bowed to coach Franz Pumaren's wards, 60-54, last week in the playoff for the right to gain the twice-to-beat incentive.

Despite not getting big games from PBA-bound Chester Tolomia, Gilbert Malabanan and veteran Rysal Castro, Shark's bid to stop ICTSI-La Salle's march to the finals depends mostly on its ability to solve the Archers' dizzying full-court, trapping game.

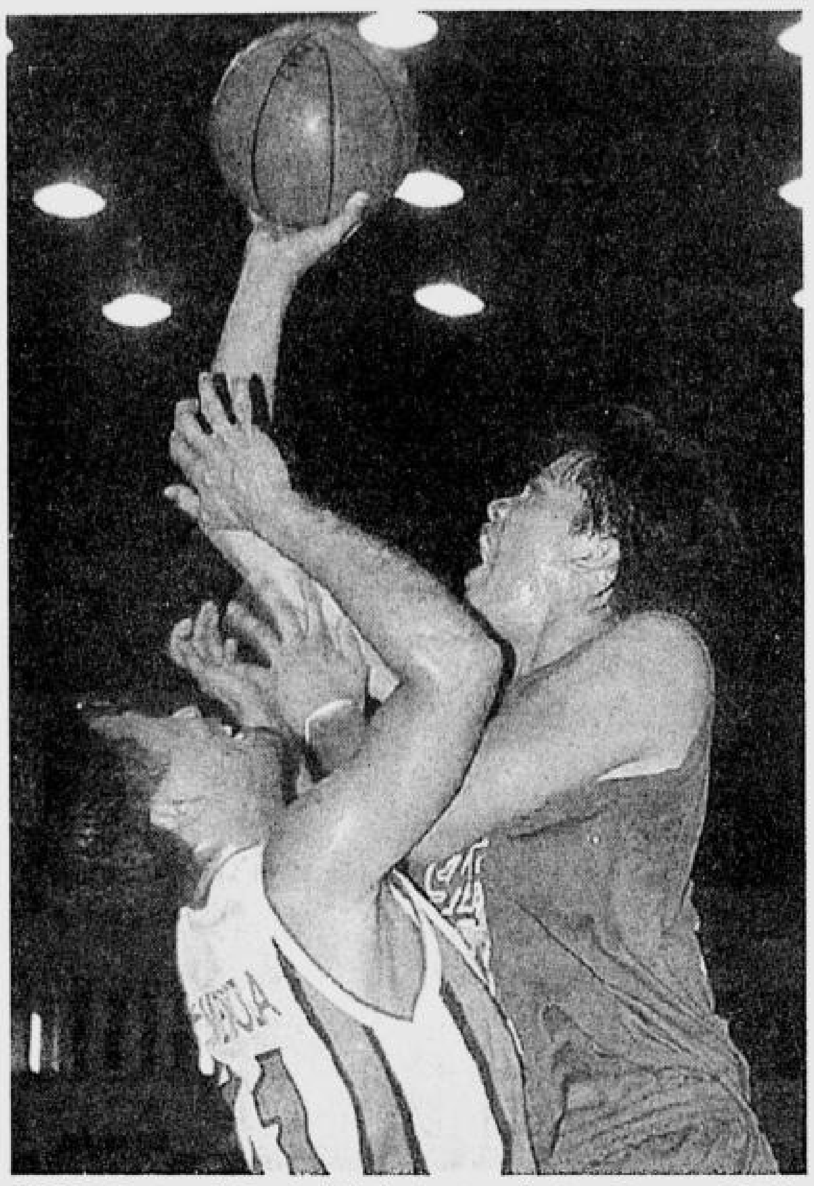
ICTSI loves to force turnovers. It also plays deliberately, unnerved even during the crucial stretches of a game.

Shark, which won its first title by edging Welcoat, 4-3, in a memorable best-of-seven titular series, has the maturity to excel in this kind of game.

"We always learn from our past mistakes," added Austria. He now relies on speedster Warren Ybañez, Clarence Cole, Gerald Ortega, Ismael Junio and Irvin Sotto.

However, the league's hottest team is Kutitap, which pummeled Blu Detergent Kings, 81-61, in the quarterfinals last Tuesday. The Sparklers, credit coach Koy Banal's disciplined, methodical-style of coaching, are playing with a newfound determination.

To stay alive, Kutitap will have to check Welcoat's 1-2 punch, slotman Yancy de Ocampo and gunner Ren Ren Ritualo.


RYSAL Castro of Shark (right) shoots over Ana Freezers' Robin Mendoza during their PBL encounter on Tuesday. Shark prevailed, 80-69, to enter the semis. BETOY JOHNSON

Doves enter best-of-3 series

DEFENDING champion St. Francis of Assisi gabbed the first finals berth after a 67-54 win over Colegio de San Lorenzo in the National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball Final Four last Tuesday at the Lyceum gym.

The victory shoved the Doves to the best-of-three final that starts on Friday at the Rizal Memorial Basketball Stadium in this tournament supported by Pagcor, DAR, Pepsi Cola, Mikasa, Splash and Topnotch Trophies of Makati.

Prior to yesterday's win, SFACS dismantled Lyceum with a 79-58 score last Tuesday that featured the return of FedEx draftee Yancy de Ocampo for the top berth in the semis. The Pirates, also owning a twice-to-beat advantage, are battling Philippine Maritime Institute at presstime for the second finals berth.

DLS-Zobel booters rip Albay-Legaspi foes, 6-1

GAMES TODAY (Philsports)
8 a.m.—Masbate vs Rizal
10 a.m.—Albay-Legaspi vs Camarines Norte

LA SALLE Zobel opened its title-retention bid in dizzying fashion as it ripped Pagasa National High School of Albay-Legaspi, 6-1, yesterday at the start of the all-Luzon finals of the 18th Coke Go-for-Goal football championship at the Philsports pitch in Pasig City.

The defending champions simply outclassed their provincial rivals en route to picking up their first victory in Group B in the Coke-sponsored tournament known as the country's official Under-16 soccer competition.

Masbate Comprehensive High School also claimed its initial win in Group A by shutting out Unson National High School of Pagsanjan, 3-0.

Gracing the simple opening rites was Philippine Football Federation president Rene Adad, the "father" of the country's longest-running privately sponsored sports program.

The La Salle booters buckled down to work early with striker Andoni Santos breaking the ice with a header in the 14th minute.

Paragua shares 2nd place

Final standings: 1. GM Rustemov 7.0 points; 2-5. GM Cifuentes, IM Paragua, GM Fernandez, GM Conquest, 6.5; 6-11. GM Epishin, IM Moreno, GM Suba, GM Movsiszian, GM Rivas, 6.0; 12-31.GM Korneev 5.5, GM Lalic... etc.

GRANDMASTER-candidate Mark Paragua, 17, tied for second with three others Sunday in the Jaen International Rapids Open in Jaen, Spain.

Among Paragua's victims in the 98-player field were Conquest, GMs Oleg Korneev and Davor Komijenovic. "My game against Korneev was my best, with few seconds on my clock I made a forced and decisive combination which shocked the Russian GM and impressed the spectators. They even asked me to analyze the game," said Paragua, a former world Under-14 rapid chess champion and the country's unofficial blitz king.

White: GM Oleg Korneev-Black: IM Mark Paragua

Sicilian Defense

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cd4 4.Nd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nbg3 Be6 8.f3 Nbd7 9.g4 b5 10.g5 b4 11.Ne2 Nh5 12.Qd2 g6 13.Qb4 a5 14.Qd2 Be7 15.a4 0-0 16.Nc3 Nf4 17.h4 h6 18.0-0-0 hg5 19.hg5 Bg5 20.Nd5 Bd5 21.ed5 Ndf6 22.Qh2 Kg7 23.Bb5 Qe7 24.Rhg1 Rh8 25.Qd2 N6d5 26.Rg5 Ne3 27.Rdg1 Qg5!! 28.Qe3 Ne2!! 0-1

SPORTSWATCH

Roligon anniversary tilt set

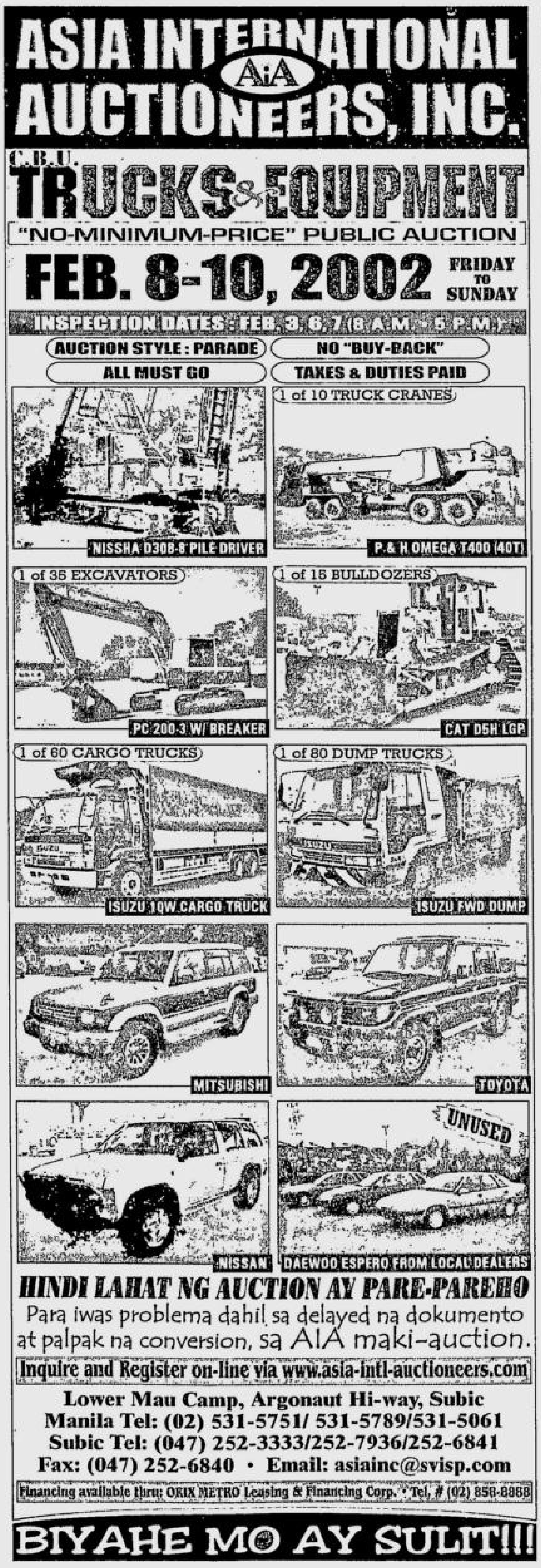
TOP breeder-cockers all over the country will vie for juicy prizes in the 12th Anniversary P5.5-million 7-Cock National Derby to be held at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City on Jan. 28 to Feb. 15. Hosted by amiable Rolly Ligon, this derby gives a chance to small-time aficionados to partake of the P5.5-million cash prize for a meager entry fee of P16,500 and a minimum bet of P5,500. Ligon said management will also give a bonus of P1,000 per win on the first and second day of 3 cock elimination (Jan. 28 and 30). Because of this, an exodus of first-day entries has already made their reservation which was cut off to 50 participants. The next batch of entries will now have to register for the second day because of the 50-entry cut off per day limit. Promoter Danny "Showdown" Ty said that submission of weights between 1.80 kg and 2.4 kg is one day before the fights, Jan. 27.

Co, Guzman rule fishing meet

BOY Co of American Technologies Inc. and Edwin Guzman of the BIR won the Philippine Game Fishing Foundation AAD bassfishing tournament at Lake Caliraya last Sunday. They beat 35 anglers in the first leg Angler of the Year (AOY) credit of 10 points with 17 bass. They are also the Dec. 2001 PGFF bassfest champion team. David Gonzales placed second on 8.724 points from 11 bass, including the heaviest bass at 1.3 kg. He won the simultaneous BASS Philippines event. 2001 AOY Rey Buencamino and sponsor Amado A. Dy, PGFF president and vice president, respectively, settled for third place. Over 110 bass were caught. For details, contact PGFF secretary Rose Aberin: tels. 373-0743/373-0248; e-mail: pgffrose@edsamail.com.ph or visit PGFF web site www.pgff.com.ph.

Tower Sports mag now on sale

WILL the Los Angeles Lakers score a three-peat and become only the fifth team in NBA history to pull off the trick? Can Michael Jordan turn the Washington Wizards into a winning team despite being one of the league's worst squads in previous years? Can the Eastern champion hold a candle against the best from the Western conference? And will the San Antonio Spurs, the last team before LA to hold a title, recover from a shocking sweep from the same Lakers in the Western finals? These and more questions will be answered by the 2002 forecast issue of Tower Sports NBA magazine. The much-awaited issue of the foremost local publication on the world's ultimate basketball league is now available at all leading bookstores and magazine stands. As usual, the publication edited by Henry Liao of the Philippine Daily Inquirer features articles written by knowledgeable NBA chroniclers Bert Ramirez, Butch Maniego, Ed Tolentino, Kenneth Garcia and Rickie Santos of the Philippine Basketball Association. Among the features are a team-by-team analysis for the current season, the reigning titlist Lakers, the legendary Jordan and the second of a series on the league's 50 greatest players as seen by Tower Sports.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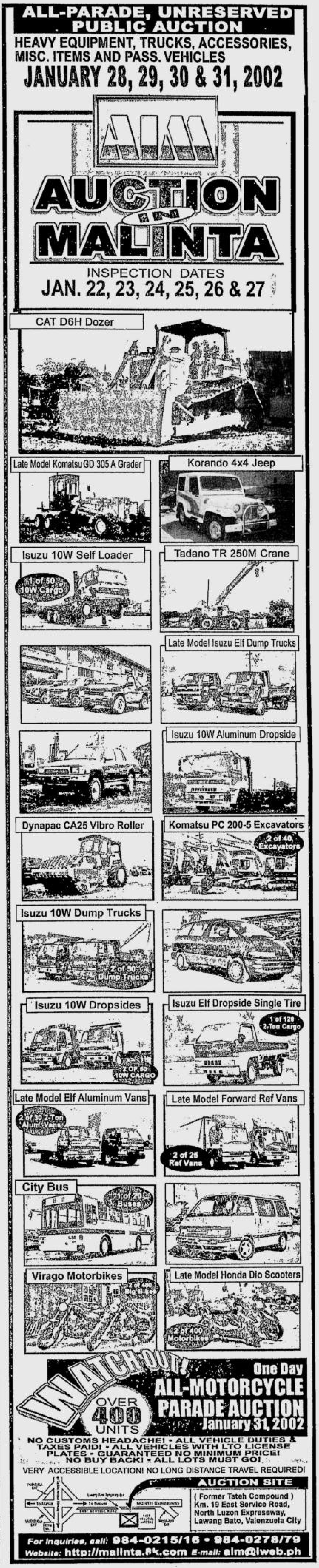
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SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

Tyson goes wild again, sparks brawl in presscon

NEW YORK —Mike Tyson and Lennox Lewis finally went at it Tuesday - at a news conference, not in a ring. Tyson charged the WBC and IBF heavyweight champion right after the start of a conference called to announce their April 6 bout, and a brawl broke out on stage at the Hudson Theater. Neither fighter hit the other, but Tyson had a cut on his hairline after the swarm of bodies was pulled apart. WBC president Jose Sulaiman was knocked down during the melee.

The news conference for Lewis' defense of his two belts against Tyson in the MGM Grand in Las Vegas was called off.

Asian Games preparation is my priority—Buhain

Appointment papers for new PSC chief pends

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BUHAIN

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo named yesterday former Southeast Asian Games star swimmer Eric Buhain chair of the Philippine Sports Commission, spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao announced.

The 32-year-old Buhain told the INQUIRER he received the news on Jan. 22 from Avelino "Nonong" Cruz, presidential legal adviser.

Buhain will replace Butch Tuason, who submitted his courtesy resignation on Jan. 17.

But Tiglao said Tuason will remain PSC chair pending the arrival of Buhain's "appointing papers."

He did not also say why President Macapagal accepted Tuason's resignation.

If a report received by the INQUIRER last night is true, Ms Macapagal will write Buhain's appointment papers after her visit to the United States. The President is due to leave on Jan. 28 and arrive on Feb. 4.

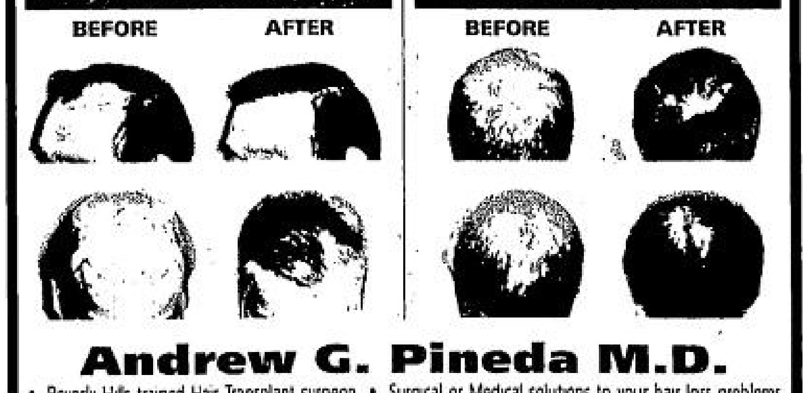
Tuason earlier said he decided to resign to spare the First Family from more intrigues.

Tuason, who served for three years, is a first cousin of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

Buhain won gold medals in the 1989 and 1991 SEA Games.

The Cavite-born Buhain said his priority project once he got his official papers from the President is the

ASIAN/ A14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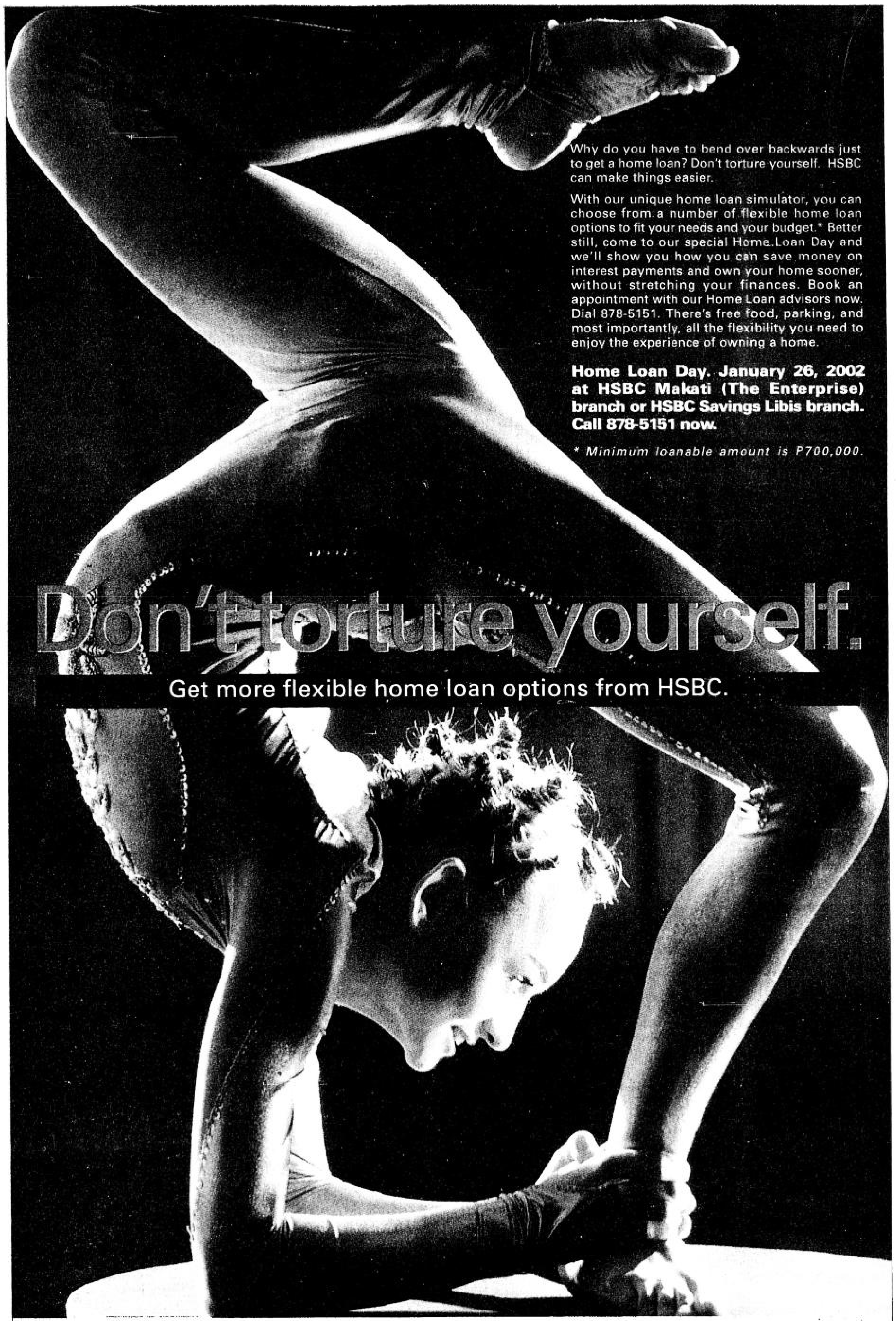
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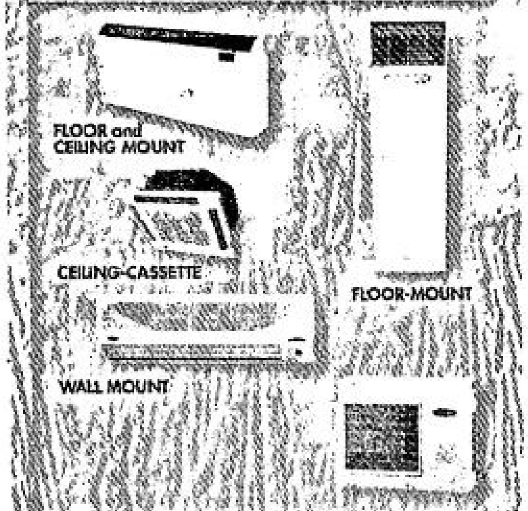

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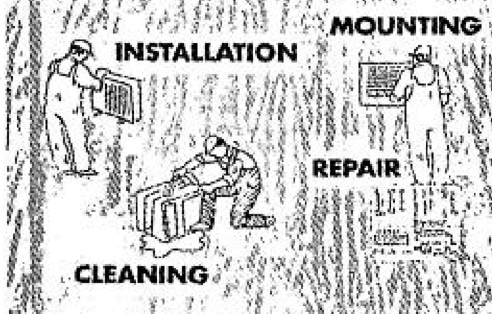

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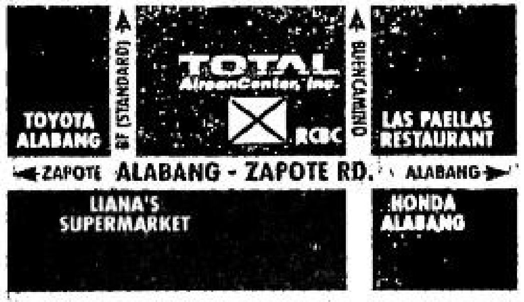

**OFFER GOOD UNTIL
JANUARY 31, 2002**

NBI trailing hired Nida killer

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco said the bureau is hunting down a male hired killer, in what he described might be the "really major breakthrough" authorities have been looking for in the Nida Blanca murder case. "He's in hiding because he fears for his life," Wycoco said. "Maybe (he fears) the ones who hired him or the law enforcers." Wycoco said nine NBI teams are now on the trail of the suspect. "I hope I could say more information about him. But the others might kill him," Wycoco said.

Philip Tubeza

Hunt on for notorious crook

POLICE launched a manhunt yesterday for four armed men who killed a still unidentified woman after robbing a fully loaded passenger bus in Mandaluyong City Sunday night. One of the four robbers was identified as Jerry Paltilla, a known robber with a string of criminal cases in his name and resident of Ilang-Ilang Street, Barangay Batasan Hills, Quezon City. He was recognized by one of the robbery victims from a picture gallery presented by the police. After the robbers fled, the unidentified victim, in her early 50s and wearing a pencil cut black skirt, slumped bloodied in one of the hallways of the commercial center. She died on the way to the hospital.

N. Flores

Banco de Oro robbed; cops offer consolation

AGNES E. DONATO

THERE'S no new twist to this story.

Bank robbers struck anew yesterday morning, victimizing the Banco de Oro branch on Timog Avenue in Quezon City.

Result: police are now hunting the eight unidentified suspects who barged into the bank at about 10:30 a.m. and fled on board a getaway van three minutes later.

The suspects left with a still undetermined amount.

If it's any consolation, police, once again a few heartbeats late, claimed that the stolen money could not be much.

They said the robbers failed to open the bank vault.

Initial investigation showed that a cream Toyota Hi-Ace stopped in front of the Banco de Oro branch on Timog Avenue at about 10:30 a.m.

Eight men, wearing bonnets and carrying long firearms, reportedly alighted from the van and ordered the security guards to open the door.

The guards, although not disarmed, reportedly did not put up a fight against the robbers.

The suspects then announced a holdup and ordered everyone inside the bank to lie face down.

The suspects however were not able to have the vault opened, as it was equipped with a time delay lock. They instead scooped the money from the tellers' drawers and fled on board the van toward the direction of Roces Avenue.

Police later found the van (Plate No. WKX 624) at the corner of Scout de Guia and Scout Santiago avenues. Recovered from the van were fatigue jackets and a bag.

Witnesses said the van passengers transferred to a red Isuzu Hi-Lander and headed toward an undisclosed direction.

No new twist. Police are conducting follow-up operations to determine the identities and whereabouts of the alleged robbers.

GONE out there, cops say of wily bank robbers. JESS YUSON

Death asked for 7 Chinese shabu lab men

BY NELSON F. FLORES AND TJ BURGONIO

THE VOLUNTEERS Against Crime and Corruption yesterday called on government to mete out the death penalty on seven Chinese arrested last week for allegedly running a shabu laboratory in San Juan.

In a statement, VACC chair Dante Jimenez said his group will closely monitor the case "to ensure those involved will be punished accordingly."

Jimenez said he was "shocked" to learn that the laboratory had been operating for at least five years, with the alleged backing of powerful political personalities.

"It is unlikely such a shabu laboratory could have existed without the knowledge of local authorities because the lab is said to have been operating for a long time, right in the middle of the metropolis," Jimenez said.

Police also reported that they are now hot on the trail of a Chinese-Filipino believed to be behind the operation of the clandestine, drug laboratory set up in a middle-class San Juan neighborhood.

A certain Juanito Ty had been managing the laboratory for some time until it was raided on Friday afternoon, said Director Efren Fernandez, head of the Philippine National Police's Narcotics Group.

"We're now securing a warrant for (Ty's) arrest," Fernandez said.

He also said police will conduct a massive investigation to determine the identities of the financial backers of the laboratory and trace the money trail from the huge operation.

"I'm worried because there might be a lot of other shabu laboratories in Metro Manila of this kind," he told reporters.

In a report, police said the laboratory had the capacity to process each month about 240 kilos of shabu worth P500 million.

The VACC has commended the Narcotics Group for conducting the Jan. 18 raid on the drug laboratory, which yielded about P100 million in unrefined shabu, laboratory equipment and drug paraphernalia.

Government prosecutors have already filed criminal charges against the seven Chinese.

Chua Sak Hap, Tian Sang, Q Che-Nang, Cha Bo, Chang Hong, Chit Di-ak and Chua Tok Sit, all natives of Fujian, China and suspected members of a China-based drug ring, were charged yesterday before the Pasig City Regional Trial Court for drug violations.

Government lawyers said there is enough prima facie evidence to warrant the filing of the case. If convicted, the Chinese may be sentenced to death or life imprisonment, the lawyers said.

Police believe the arrested Chinese worked as laboratory technicians.

Records showed the Narcotics Group raided the suspected drug laboratory on Araullo Street, Barangay Addition Hills, San Juan on Jan. 18, based on intelligence reports.

Police officials claimed the laboratory had been operating for about five to 10 years—a charge that has been vehemently denied by San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, who said they have documentary evidence to prove that the present occupants of the alleged laboratory rented the place only late last year.

In a press conference, PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza told reporters that a powerful political clan was behind the operation of the drug laboratory.

Jude Estrada, Ejercito's half-brother, said he felt that Mendoza was alluding to his family.

Ejercito objected to police officials' insinuations that the Estrada family was behind the operation of the drug laboratory, and urged them not to be involved in the political rivalry between his family and the Arroyo administration.

He also asked the police to stop linking his family to the illegal drug trade.

Ejercito resented the PNP's move to turn the alleged laboratory site into a museum, where drug paraphernalia seized in previous operations will be displayed.

The mayor claimed the police are making it appear that all the drug paraphernalia in "the museum" came from San Juan.

"What they are doing is unfair to our policemen, local barangay officials and the people of San Juan," Ejercito said.

The San Juan municipal council also reacted violently to Mendoza's statement.

Councilor Dante Santiago described Mendoza's statement to be "highly unfair" to San Juan officials and challenged the PNP chief to either "put up or shut up."

HIS FATHER'S SON

With the image of his father, former President Joseph Estrada, looming large behind him, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito appears in fighting form as he once more defends the clan honor, this time against police innuendoes that his family was behind the operation of an illegal drug laboratory in his municipality.

Guard saw how John O. van was stolen

BY NELSON FORTE FLORES

A SECURITY, who witnessed how the van of Sen. John Osmeña was stolen, has offered to help lawmen in their investigation, a source at the Eastern Police District said yesterday.

The guard, Noel Manigid, had a good look at the lone individual who drove off with the vehicle, the source said.

"The information he could provide is vital in the investigation and solution of the case," the source, who asked not to be named for security reasons, said.

As this developed, Mandaluyong City Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. ordered local police authorities to conduct a thorough investigation of the incident.

Abalos said more policemen would be deployed, especially in public areas, to deter criminality.

Osmeña's 1996 Toyota Prado van, with front protocol Plate No. 7 and rear Plate No. WWW 717, was stolen Monday night while parked near the west entrance of the Edsa Shangri-La Plaza Hotel.

Osmeña was attending a hearing on the privatization of the National Power Corp. in the hotel when the incident happened.

Osmeña's driver of two years, Eddie Batian, momentarily left the van to relieve himself.

When Batian returned, the van was already gone. He was immediately fired from his job by a furious senator.

Two years ago, the Mitsubishi Pajero of then-senator Juan Ponce Enrile was also stolen.

The vehicle was later found in the compound of the National Bureau of Investigation on Taft Avenue in Manila

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Result of cops' test 'shocking, alarming'

By Jerome Aning

"DISMAL and shocking" was how the leader of the opposition in the Manila City Council described the recently concluded Service Induction and Reorientation (SIR) Program given to the 3,000 operatives of the Western Police District.

Councilor Don Ramon Bagatsing, however, refused to divulge the exact results of the SIR. He instead appealed to Mayor Lito Atienza to release the results to the public and decide what to do with them.

"The results of the SIR are rather disappointing and, frankly speaking, I was alarmed, disturbed and shocked," he told the INQUIRER over the phone.

"I think it is very urgent that Manila residents know now how their policemen fared," he added.

Early this week, Bagatsing said he and a few councilors were given a briefing on the results of the SIR by a top official of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, which designed and conducted the program.

The SIR was begun in October last year. The 3,100 WPD operatives were grouped in batches of 40. Ten batches at a time took the 64-hour syllabus, equivalent to three units in college.

The program aims to familiarize members of the WPD, especially those assigned to Manila for the first time, with the city's geography, existing ordinances and urban development projects. The SIR includes a psychological exam and a drug test, which the policemen also have to pass.

Although Bagatsing hinted that there were policemen who failed the program, he refused to say the percentage of those who got failing grades.

"That's for the mayor to say since the results have been forwarded to him," he said. "I am still digesting the results at this point."

The councilor added that he "fully supports" Atienza's plan to make the SIR mandatory for all present and future city policemen. But he said the WPD administration should be the one who must pay for the cost of the testing.

The SIR was part of Atienza's campaign for the restoration of the supervision and control of the police to local government units.

The mayor earlier said he would personally recommend policemen who failed the test to be "shipped out" of the capital.

Red Tide toxins in Manila Bay

By Christine A. Gaylican

A BAN on the consumption of shellfish has been imposed in the cities of Las Piñas and Parañaque after traces of Red Tide toxins were found in Manila Bay.

According to the Red Tide monitoring activities of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, shellfish, such as oysters, were found to contain red tide toxin.

The local "alamang" or tiny shrimps from Red Tide affected areas are also not safe for human consumption.

BFAR officials said fish and squid are safe for human consumption provided they are fresh and their internal parts such as gills and intestines are removed and washed thoroughly before cooking.

Red tide toxins thrive under cold weather conditions, which is why the waters off the coast of Las Piñas and Parañaque cities are contaminated, the BFAR said.

"Because of the cold weather, the presence of the red tide toxin became more pronounced," said Josefina Genesera, spokesperson for the BFAR's National Task Force on Red Tide.

The task force advised residents of Las Piñas and Parañaque to avoid eating shellfish.

Other areas found positive for Red Tide toxins are the Masinloc waters in Zambales; Mandaon and Milagros waters in Masbate; Dumanquilas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur; and Balite Bay in Mati, Davao Oriental.

The following areas are free of Red Tide toxins: Cavite, Navotas, Bulacan and Bataan Waters in Manila Bay, Malampaya Sound in Palawan; Banago waters in Bacolod City; Victorias waters in Negros Occidental; Sapian Bay and Tinagong Dagat in Capiz; Maqueda and Villareal Bays in Western Samar; Calbayog waters in Calbayog City; Cancabato Bay in Tacloban City; Sorsogon Bay in Sorsogon; Illana and Sabiguey Bays in Zamboanga del Sur; and Tanguines Lagoon in Camiguin Island.

To protect seafood consumers, the Red Tide Task Force will continue to monitor the situation, in coordination with the local government units.

Panic at US Embassy; 'terrorist' released

By Christian V. Esguerra

GUARDS at the US Embassy were alarmed when Majeed S.H. Al Saud, a Saudi Arabia national, left a green travel bag and began loitering the area around 5:45 a.m. yesterday.

Fear over the presence of a terrorist soon gripped the embassy compound in Pasay City.

Al Saud arrived at the embassy on board a taxicab with license Plate No. WFP-951, according to security officer Jimmy Castillo.

Castillo said he and PO3 Alejandro Cabatingan approached Al Saud but the Arab allegedly ignored them and continued roaming in front of the embassy.

Responding to an alarm, members of the Pasay Special Weapons and Tactics, the Mobile Patrol Unit, and the Western Police District bomb squad rushed to the scene.

They inspected Al Saud's bag.

No explosives were found.

Authorities later brought the suspected terrorist to the Pasay police headquarters for interrogation.

But a defiant Al Saud refused to yield to police questioning.

Senior Insp. Joaquin Alva of the Pasay Mobile Patrol Unit said US Embassy officials urged police to further investigate Al Saud to determine if he has links with any terrorist group.

A representative of the Arabian Embassy negotiated for Al Saud's release.

Police had to accede. They set the Arab free since they could not file any charges against him.

Task force formed to check liquor sale to minors

THE QUEZON City government has stepped up its campaign against gas station shops and convenience stores in the city that sell liquor to minors.

Liquor Licensing and Regulatory Board (LLRB) chair Alberto Galarpe recently approved through a memorandum order creating a five-man task force to spearhead the campaign.

According to Galarpe, the task force was organized to "conduct verification (of reported violations) such that proper action may be instituted against parties to these illegal acts."

Earlier reports showed that the selling of liquor to minors in gas station shops contribute to illegal street racing and other petty crimes.

The task force will also coordinate with the Central Police District (CPD) in going after syndicates that manufacture and sell fake liquor.

As this developed, two gas stations in Barangays Sauyo and Bahay Toro were cited by the task force for selling liquor without permit.

The erring gas stations were identified as the East Gate Shell Station at Congressional corner Mindanao avenues owned by a certain Nora Bordeos and the Mindanao Shell Stations on Mindanao Avenue owned by a certain Capt. Carmelo dela Cruz.

Agnes E. Donato

Justice Nazario's appointment questioned

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE appointment by the Supreme Court of Sandiganbayan Justice Minita Chico-Nazario as chairperson of a special anti-graft court to try all corruption cases against former President Erap came as a shock to many lawyers who know her.

Ten or so lawyers have volunteered information about Justice Nazario. They called her names which I can't print here lest I incur a libel suit or get slapped with a contempt-of-court penalty. One made a statement about her which I can't print because it may be libelous.

The high court may want to look into the allegations of my lawyer-informants?

***

A newspaper report said the son of a "San Juan-based" politician was the one behind the operations of a shabu laboratory in the town which was raided by the police recently.

The police would not identify the politician's son. But already, half-brothers Jude Estrada and San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito have denied their involvement in illicit drugs in the town.

Before the drug bust, Ejercito had said that San Juan was a "drug-free" town.

Now, the mayor is eating his words.

***

JV Ejercito might be innocent, but I wonder if the same thing could be said of Jude, one of Erap's two sons by Sen. Loi Estrada.

It will be recalled that when Erap was still Vice President and chief of the defunct Presidential Anti-Crime Commission (PACC), Jude was reported to have been involved in drug trafficking.

If memory serves, Jude beat up a notorious drug pusher, a woman named Española, after she allegedly failed to remit earnings from the sale of illegal drugs.

The story died down after Erap sent Jude to the United States where he studied flying a helicopter.

Jude came back when Erap became president. He was commissioned Air Force captain although he didn't undergo basic military training.

***

The Marines will return to Palawan to go after New People's Army (NPA) rebels now roaming free in the province.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva said he would order the Philippine Marines Corps commandant, Maj. Gen. Librado Ladia, to reassign to the Western Command (Wescom) a Marine contingent that was pulled out two years ago to fight Moro rebels in Maguindanao. Wescom is based in Puerto Princesa City, capital of Palawan.

On Tuesday, this corner reported that at least 80 NPA guerrillas have been operating in the province after the Marines left for Mindanao.

Palaweños will rejoice at the news of the return of the Marines. The NPAs have reportedly been collecting "revolutionary taxes" from some residents in remote areas of the province.

***

To Lourdes L. Santos, of 838 San Rafael St., Plainview, Mandaluyong: I stand corrected on my wrong attribution of the passage: "Don't ask for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee."

Ms Santos said that the passage comes from poet and priest John Donne (1572-1631), and not from another English poet, Thomas Gray (1716-1771) who wrote the famous "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (not "Elegy on a Country Churchyard," as mentioned in this column on Dec. 24, 2001. I even got the title wrong).

Thank you, Ms Santos, for the enlightenment.

***

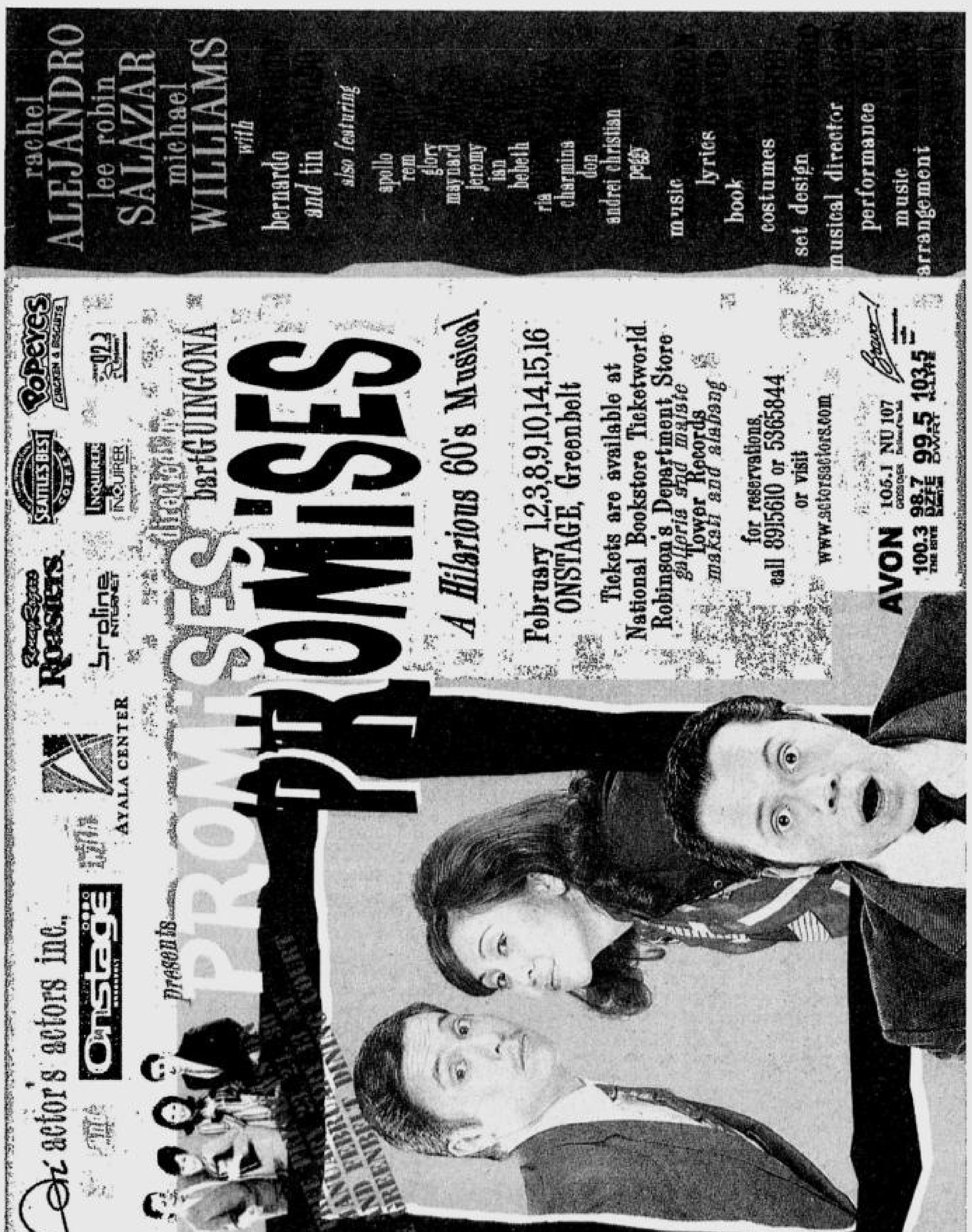
I have never authorized anybody to be my "eyes and ears" at the Bureau of Customs or any other government office, for that matter.

A letter writer, who signed his name as Jose S. Reyes, says that "a media practitioner who hangs around the piers instills fear in the hearts of customs officials by declaring himself as the eyes and ears at the customs of the Tulfo brothers."

If Reyes' allegation is true, then the concerned reporter is an impostor. By the way, the telephone number where Reyes said he could be reached kept on ringing but nobody answered.

People who claim to be my "legmen" or "eyes and ears" are impostors because my spies or sources of information in some government agencies are insiders who want to keep their identities top-secret.

Which stupid government official or employee would want to be identified with this writer, who's been described as a "dead man walking?"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Ex-cops caught extorting

By Jerome Aning

TWO retired policemen posing as City Hall inspectors were caught in the act of extorting money and were promptly arrested by Western Police District operatives in Sta. Cruz, Manila yesterday.

The suspects, ex-SPO4 Alfredo de Guzman, 57, of 1131 Antipolo St., Tondo, Manila and ex-Senior Insp. Narciso Flores, 58, of Las Piñas City, were about to victimize occupants of a house on 1753 Felix Huertas St. in Sta. Cruz.

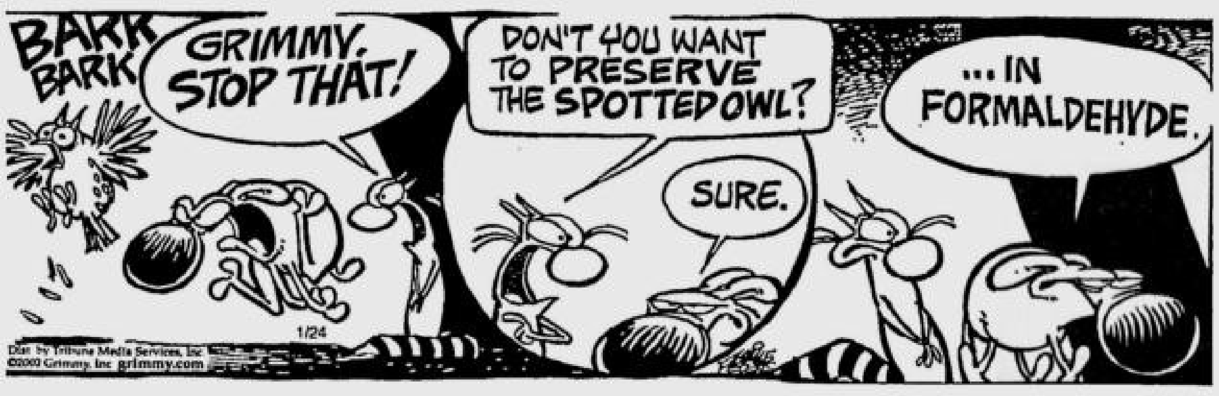
The house, owned by one Reynaldo Rivera, is undergoing renovation. Rivera's caretaker, Eligio Espinosa and carpenter Ernesto Patio, told investigators they were accosted by the suspects last Jan. 21 for "a host of building violations," including the putting of gravel and sand on the sidewalk.

De Guzman and Flores, the complainants recounted, threatened to arrest them and another worker unless they paid a fine of P3,000.

Espinosa said he was able to dole out only P2,000 but he promised to pay the balance at noon yesterday.

After the suspects left, Patio and Espinosa went to Barangay 337 chair Jesus Marquez, who reported the incident to SOG commander Supt. Ernesto Ibay.

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


BARK BARK
GRIMMY. STOP THAT!
DON'T YOU WANT TO PRESERVE THE SPOTTED OWL?
SURE.
...IN FORMALDEHYDE.
1/24
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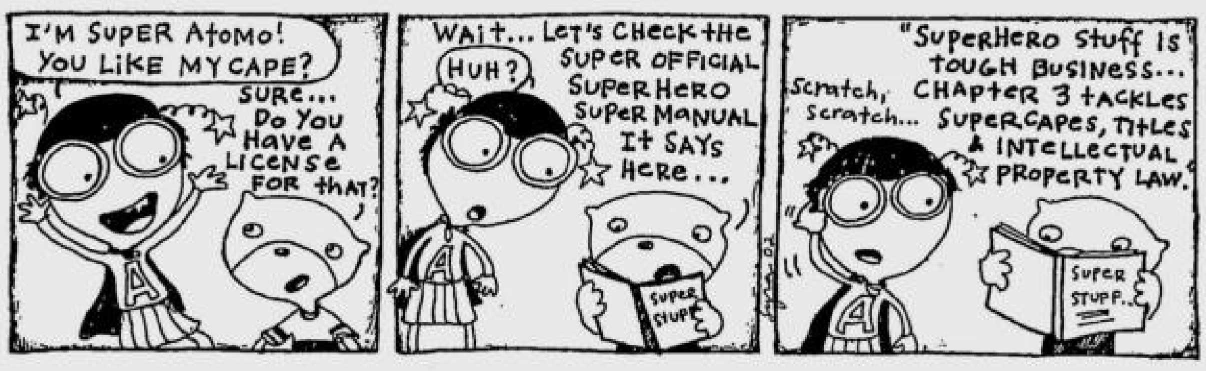
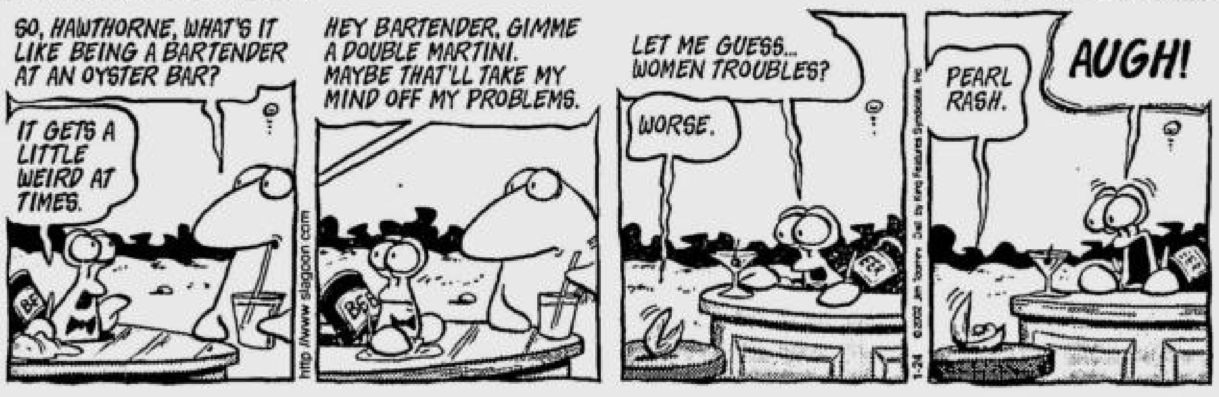
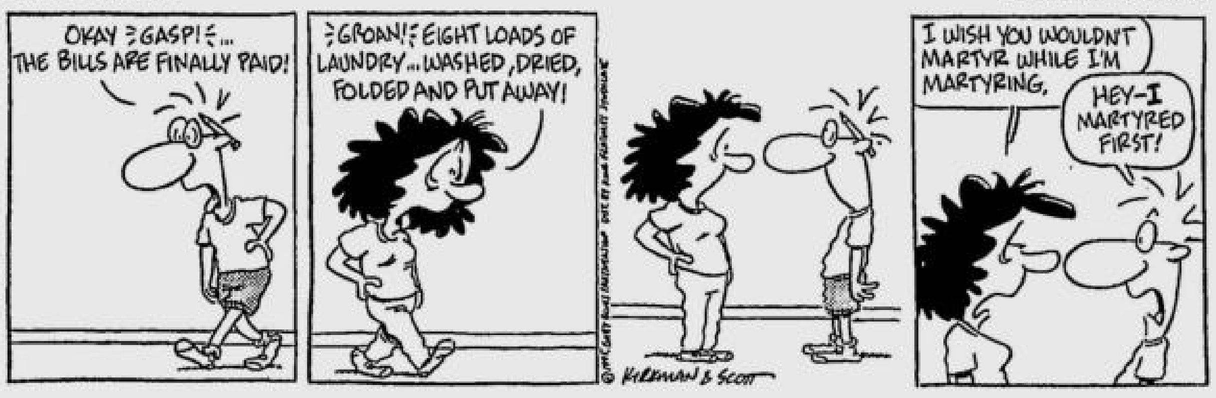
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I'M SUPER Atomo! You LIKE MY CAPE?
SURE... Do You Have A LICENSE FOR that?
Wait... Let's Check the SUPER OFFICIAL SuperHero SUPER MANUAL It SAYS Here...
HUH?
SUPER STUPF
"SuperHero Stuff Is TOUGH BUSINESS... CHAPTER 3 tACKLES SUPERCAPES, TITLES & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW."
Scratch, Scratch...
SUPER STUPF...

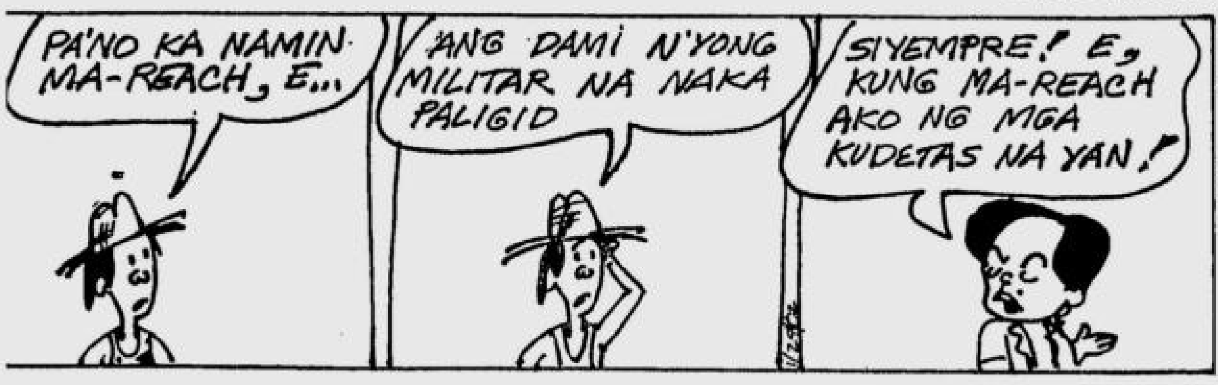
SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


SO, HAWTHORNE, WHAT'S IT LIKE BEING A BARTENDER AT AN OYSTER BAR?
IT GETS A LITTLE WEIRD AT TIMES.
HEY BARTENDER, GIMME A DOUBLE MARTINI. MAYBE THAT'LL TAKE MY MIND OFF MY PROBLEMS.
LET ME GUESS... WOMEN TROUBLES?
WORSE.
PEARL RASH.
AUGH!
http://www.slagoon.com

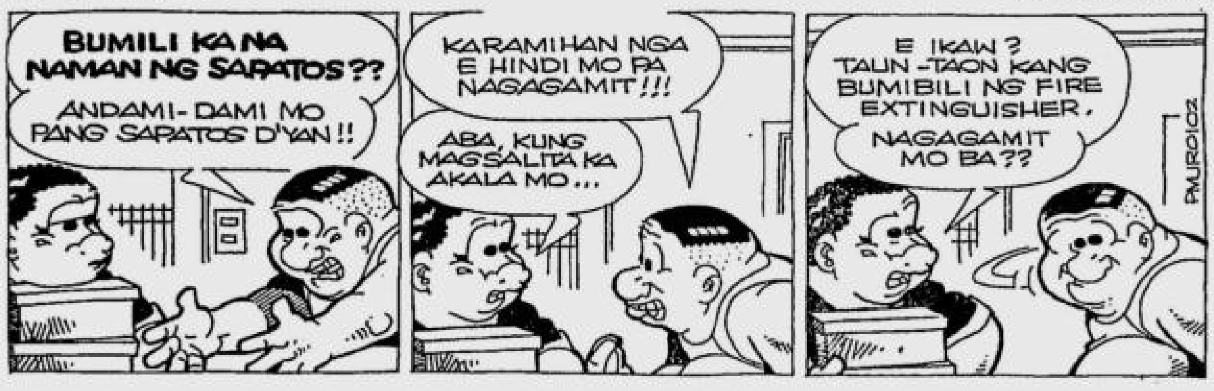
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


OKAY ≷GASP!≶... THE BILLS ARE FINALLY PAID!
≷GROAN!≶ EIGHT LOADS OF LAUNDRY... WASHED, DRIED, FOLDED AND PUT AWAY!
I WISH YOU WOULDN'T MARTYR WHILE I'M MARTYRING.
HEY—I MARTYRED FIRST!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

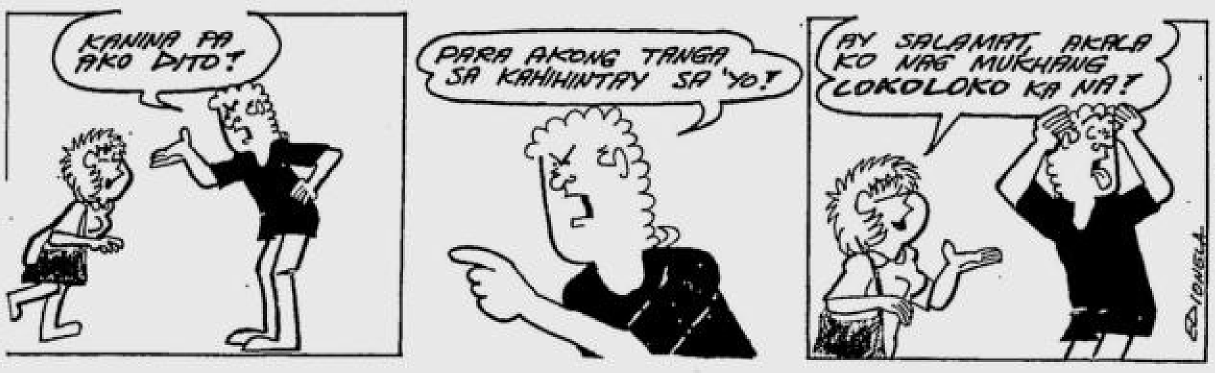
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


PA'NO KA NAMIN MA-REACH, E...
ANG DAMI N'YONG MILITAR NA NAKA PALIGID
SIYEMPRE! E, KUNG MA-REACH AKO NG MGA KUDETAS NA YAN!

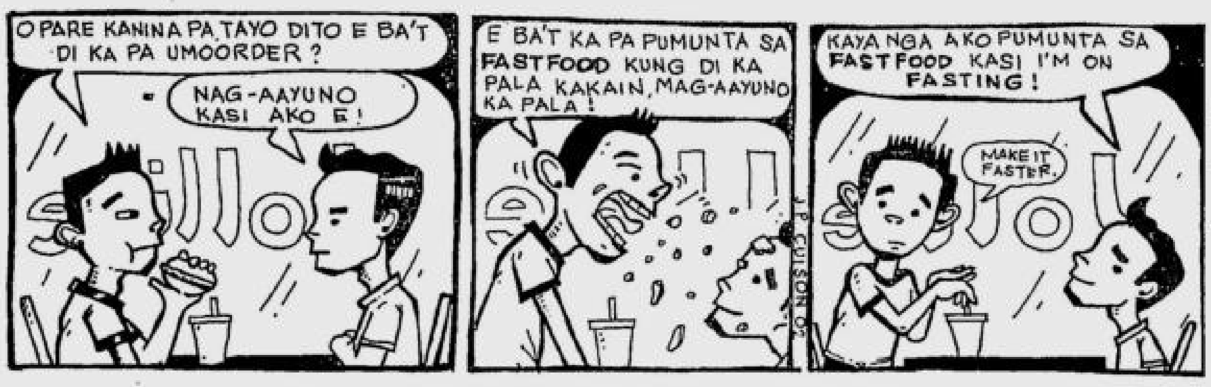
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


BUMILI KA NA NAMAN NG SAPATOS??
ANDAMI-DAMI MO PANG SAPATOS D'YAN!!
KARAMIHAN NGA E HINDI MO PA NAGAGAMIT!!!
ABA, KUNG MAGSALITA KA AKALA MO...
E IKAW? TAUN-TAON KANG BUMIBILI NG FIRE EXTINGUISHER.
NAGAGAMIT MO BA??
PMJR2002

SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


KANINA PA AKO DITO!
PARA AKONG TANGA SA KAHIHINTAY SA 'YO!
AY SALAMAT, AKALA KO NAG MUKHANG LOKOLOKO KA NA!
DIONELA

GARAPATA BLOOD BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


O PARE KANINA PA TAYO DITO E BA'T DI KA PA UMOORDER?
NAG-AAYUNO KASI AKO E!
E BA'T KA PA PUMUNTA SA FASTFOOD KUNG DI KA PALA KAKAIN, MAG-AAYUNO KA PALA!
KAYA NGA AKO PUMUNTA SA FASTFOOD KASI I'M ON FASTING!
MAKE IT FASTER.
J.P. CUISON 02

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mary Lou Retton, Ray Stevens, Elliott Abrams, Neil Diamond

Happy Birthday: You will have no trouble taking all the information you've learned and applying it to your future goals. You will show great leadership this year. Your added discipline will aid you in making your life better. Your numbers are 12, 19, 22, 36, 43, 49

ARIES (March 21-April 19): This is a perfect day to get out and about. You will meet someone who sparks your interest if you are single. If you are married you should plan an eventful day with your partner. Do something different to offset your daily routine.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You may not be feeling satisfied by your current job. Check out your options. You can get ahead but only if you are willing to compromise.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You'll have some wonderful ideas that could lead to a profitable venture. Let your imagination flow and take advantage of your creative talent.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll do well to work behind the scenes. Don't neglect your health because you are too busy or you don't like going to the doctor.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Consider going into business with someone you trust. If you put your heads together you can come up with an idea that could turn into a gold mine.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your professional ambitions will be important. Plan your strategy and work hard but don't put extreme deadlines on yourself. Talk to someone with experience to better gauge your workload.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't overreact if someone tells you that you don't have enough experience. Sign up for courses that will give you the edge. You should consider doing a bit of traveling.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): If you've been hesitating to invest in yourself you will miss out on a great opportunity. You need to look at all your options as well as your present portfolio.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Contracts may not turn out as planned. Be sure to read the fine print. Try to work things out with your emotional partner.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can expect someone you work with to put a damper on your day. If you haven't been feeling up to par book an appointment with the doctor. It's time to rejuvenate.

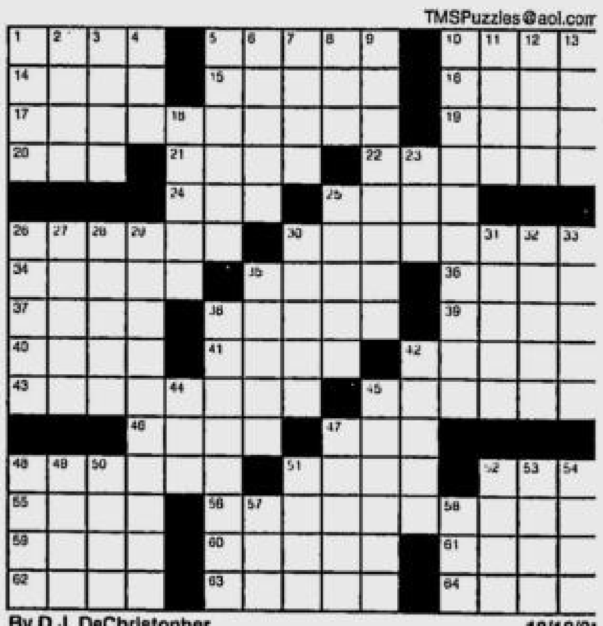
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will be entertaining and relate well if you join groups that offer philosophic discussions and new and interesting ideas. This is a great day to socialize.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't let things get to you. You will have added discipline so put it into your work and do the best job possible.

Birthday Baby: You are well disciplined when it comes to learning. You will enjoy subjects that offer you a creative outlet. You have a high level of integrity, and you are a loyal and devoted friend.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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55 56 57 58
59 60 61
62 63 64

By D.J. DeChristopher
Staten Island, NY

12/10/01

ACROSS

1 Booty
5 "__ the Horrible"
0 Crazes
4 Window segment
5 Stand
6 Bryce Canyon's state
7 Entr'acte
9 Region
0 Born, in Bordeaux
1 Scat singer Fitzgerald
2 Heckled
4 Hurry
5 In a lazy manner
6 Occur
0 Resolute
4 Narcotic drug
5 4th-century year
6 Over, in Oberhausen
7 Mercedes-__
8 Socialist artist Ben
9 Pueblo people
0 "Caruso" singer Joan
1 Elwes of "The Princess Bride"
2 Tenochtitlan resident
3 Flying singers
5 French palace
6 Zeno of __
7 Unit of wire
8 Lack of vigor
1 NASCAR driver Yarborough
2 Some U. degs.
5 Calendar info
6 Third of three on a sailing vessel
9 Bus. letter directive
0 Get around
1 Song for Callas
2 Castle ringer
3 Aired again
4 Expensive

DOWN

1 Whirl around
2 Taper off
3 Place a stake
4 Turn right!
5 Lincoln's V.P.
6 White poplar
7 Pyramid site
8 Axlike tool
9 Decree again
10 Bear of rhyme
11 Full alphabet
12 Polonius or Laertes
13 Storage structure
18 Alter a skirt's length
23 Everyone
25 Like wanderer's feet?
26 Roswell, NM neighbor
27 Like raised oars
28 Like Christmas decorations
29 Perplexity
30 Wound marks
31 Touches on
32 Taylor or Adoree
33 Instant
35 Singer Khan
38 Sensational headline
42 Fred or Gracie
44 Mr. Baba
45 Ford of fashion
47 Miata maker
48 Eve's old man
49 W. alliance
50 Bluesy James
51 Russian ruler
52 Uncovered
53 "Heat of the Moment" group
54 Arcturus, e.g.
57 __ had it up to here!
58 Frenzied

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	T	L	A	S	E	S	■	P	A	S	■	B	O	R
B	R	A	V	U	R	A	■	U	S	A	■	E	R	E
B	A	N	A	N	A	S	P	L	I	T	■	G	A	D
O	C	T	■	■	S	H	O	P	A	R	O	U	N	D
T	H	E	T	A	■	■	D	Y	N	A	M	I	T	E
T	E	R	E	N	C	E	■	■	S	P	I	N	E	S
S	A	N	D	T	R	A	P	S	■	■	T	E	S	T
■	■	■	■	H	O	T	D	O	G	S	■	■	■	■
C	H	E	R	■	■	S	T	U	P	I	D	E	S	T
L	I	N	E	N	S	■	■	R	O	M	A	N	C	E
A	T	T	A	I	N	T	S	■	■	A	S	T	O	R
M	A	I	D	M	A	R	I	A	N	■	■	H	U	E
A	C	T	■	B	R	O	N	T	O	S	A	U	R	S
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T	I	E	■	E	D	S	■	M	E	N	D	E	R	S

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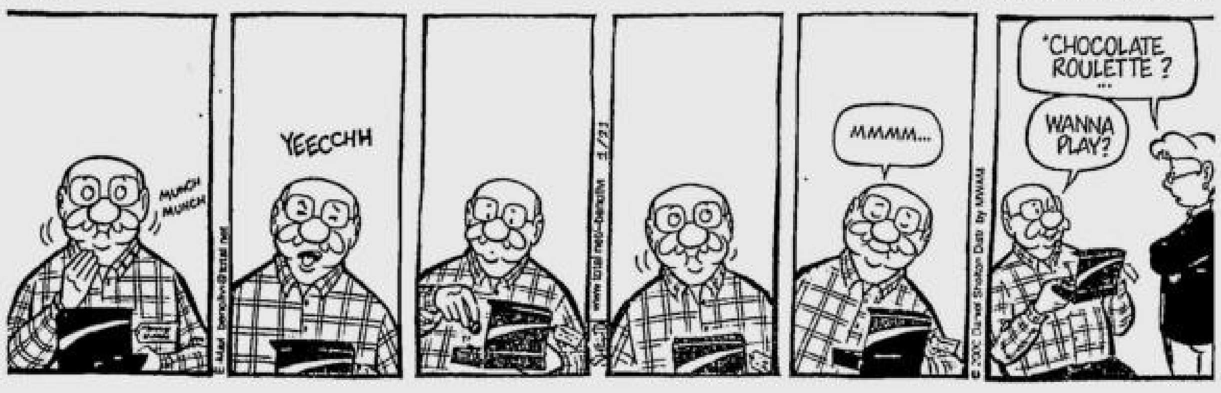
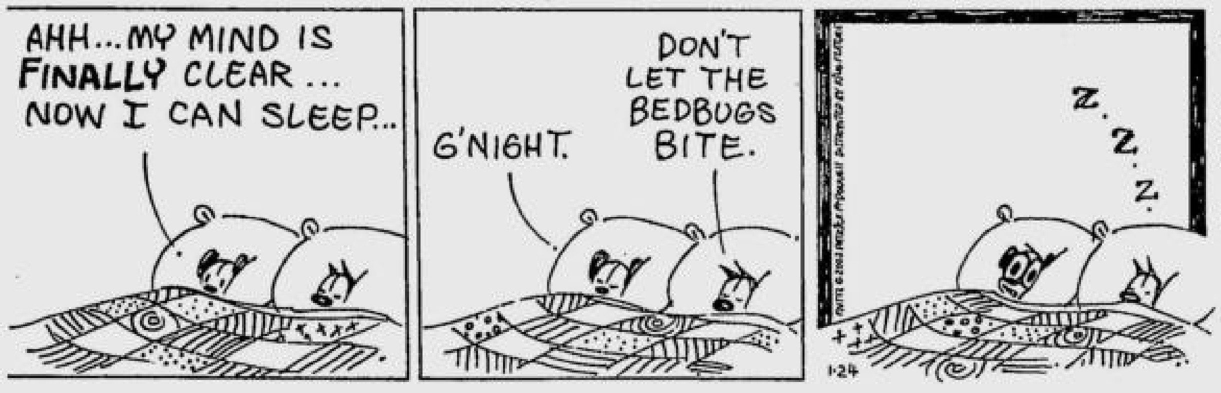
12/10/01

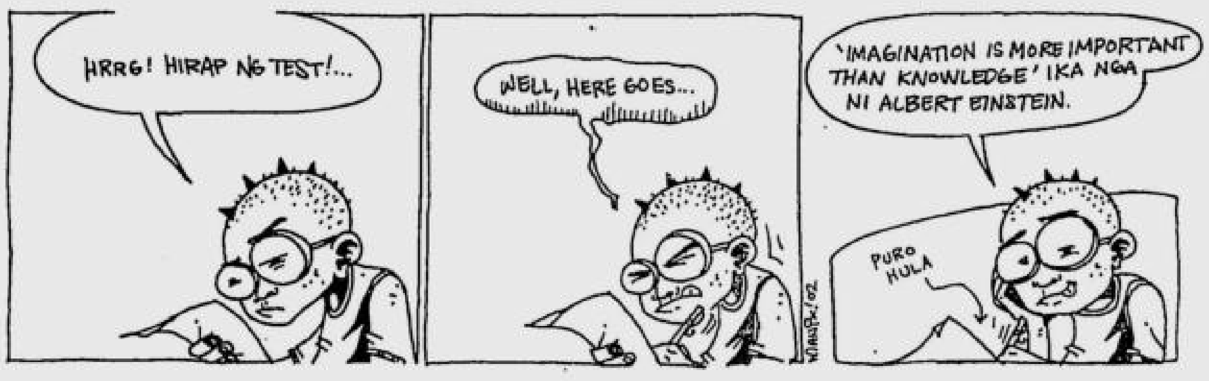
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


MUNCH MUNCH
YEECCHH
MMMM...
"CHOCOLATE ROULETTE?" ...
WANNA PLAY?

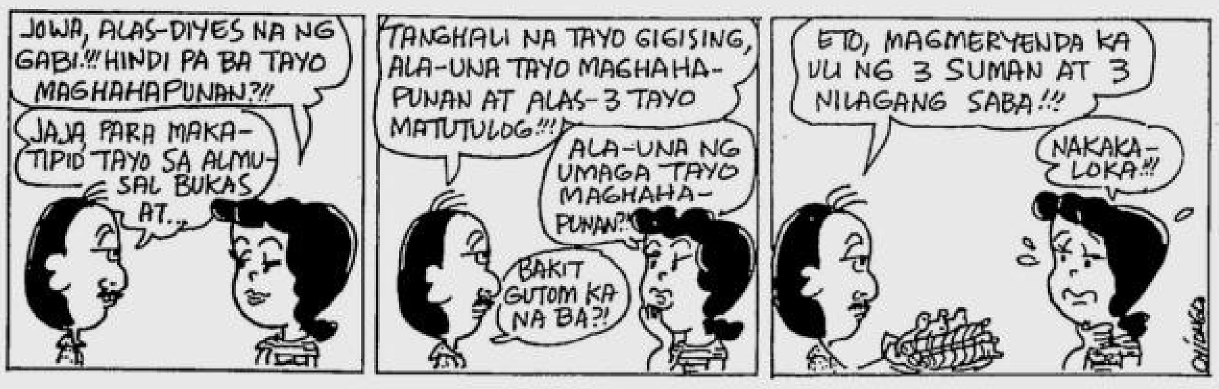
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


AHH... MY MIND IS FINALLY CLEAR... NOW I CAN SLEEP...
G'NIGHT.
DON'T LET THE BEDBUGS BITE.
Z. Z. Z.
1-24

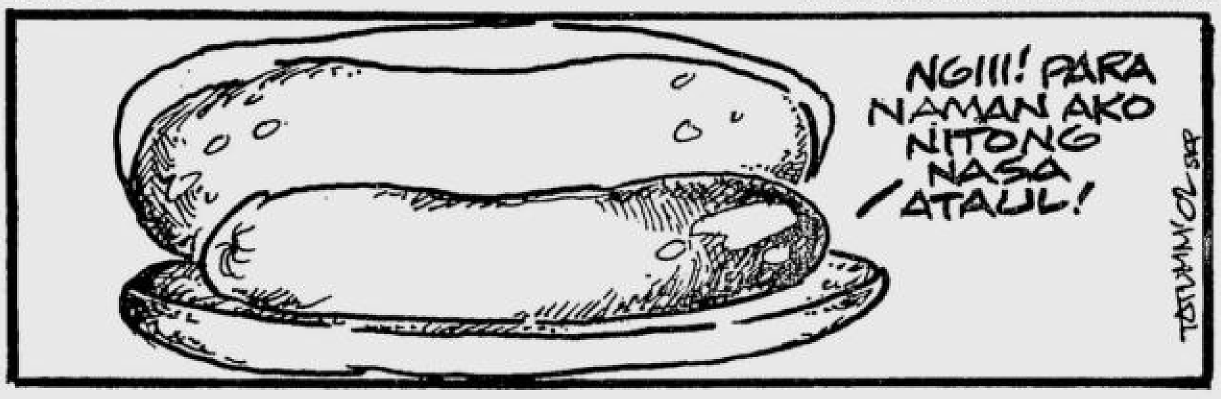
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


HRRG! HIRAP NG TEST!...
WELL, HERE GOES...
'IMAGINATION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN KNOWLEDGE' IKA NGA NI ALBERT EINSTEIN.
PURO HULA
MANIX '02

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, ALAS-DIYES NA NG GABI!!! HINDI PA BA TAYO MAGHAHAPUNAN?!!
JAJA PARA MAKA-TIPID TAYO SA ALMUSAL BUKAS AT...
TANGHALI NA TAYO GIGISING, ALA-UNA TAYO MAGHAHAPUNAN AT ALAS-3 TAYO MATUTULOG!!!
ALA-UNA NG UMAGA TAYO MAGHAHAPUNAN?!
BAKIT GUTOM KA NA BA?!
ETO, MAGMERYENDA KA VU NG 3 SUMAN AT 3 NILAGANG SABA!!!
NAKAKALOKA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


NGIII! PARA NAMAN AKO NITONG NASA ATAUL!
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1 MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER! In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND	1 THE OTHERS In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	5 THE LORD OF THE RINGS In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	1 .MOV - THE DIGITAL MOVIE FEST In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	1 OCEAN'S ELEVEN THX In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 OCEAN'S ELEVEN In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	2 BEHIND ENEMY LINES In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	6 AMERICAN ADOBO In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND	2 OCEAN'S ELEVEN In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND	2 THE OTHERS In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 THE LORD OF THE RINGS In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	3 OCEAN'S ELEVEN THX In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	7 ZOOLANDER In DTS DIGITAL SOUND	3 THE OTHERS In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	3 AMERICAN ADOBO In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 AMERICAN ADOBO In DTS DIGITAL SOUND	4 CORKY ROMANO In DTS DIGITAL SOUND	Art Film	4 WEEKEND W/ POPS JAN. 25 & 26 9:00 PM Onstage	4 CORKY ROMANO In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
				5 BEHIND ENEMY LINES In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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1 (DDS)	THE OTHERS
2 (SDDS)	ZOOLANDER
3 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4 GOLD (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	CORKY ROMANO
6 GOLD (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
8	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
9	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
10	AMERICAN ADOBO

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	RESERVE
2	BUKO PANDAN
3 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	CORKY ROMANO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5	BUKO PANDAN

METROPOLIS star
Tel. 850 4285

1	CORKY ROMANO
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
4	BUKO PANDAN
5	THE OTHERS
6	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
7	RESERVE
8	RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) Tel. 7512010 to 13

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	BURLESK KING
2	HUBOG

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	
2	BUKO PANDAN
3	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	
A	

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
3	
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
5	CORKY ROMANO
6	AMERICAN ADOBO
7 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
8 (SDDS)	THE OTHERS
9 (DOLBY)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
4 (SDDS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5	HUBOG
6 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RINGS
7 (DTS)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
8	BUKO PANDAN
9	BURLESK KING

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3	AMERICAN ADOBO
4	CORKY ROMANO
5 (SDDS)	THE OTHERS
6	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
7 (DOLBY)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
8	BURLESK KING

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	CORKY ROMANO
3 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4	AMERICAN ADOBO
5 (SDDS)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	MEN'S
Lords	TUKSO
Jennet	RESERVE

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	THE OTHERS

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
5	THE OTHERS

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	CORKY ROMANO
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	BUKO PANDAN

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512 0115

1 (DOLBY)	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	AMERICAN ADOBO
2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2 (DTS)	AMERICAN ADOBO
3 (DOLBY)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	AMERICAN ADOBO
2 (DOLBY)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
3 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	WALANG IWANAN
2	GLADIATOR
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MovieTown
(Tarlac)

1	BUKO PANDAN
2	ON THE LINE
3 (DOLBY)	ZOOLANDER
4 (DTS)	BURLESK KING

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	BUKO PANDAN
3	BURLESK KING
4 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3 (DTS)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	BUKO PANDAN
5	AMERICAN ADOBO

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	BUKO PANDAN

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	BUKO PANDAN

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	BURLESK KING
2	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
3	BUKO PANDAN

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3	LORD OF THE RINGS

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
2 (DTS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	BUKO PANDAN
2	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
3	BURLESK KING

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	BURLESK KING
2	ZOOLANDER
3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RINGS
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4 (DTS EX)	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER

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THX

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	LORD OF THE RING
4	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
5	MAHAL KITA . . .
6	THE OTHERS
7	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
8	AMERICAN ADOBO
9	CORKY ROMANO
10	ZOOLANDER

ERMITA 536-7806 TO 12

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	LORD OF THE RINGS
3	MAHAL KITA . . .
4	THE OTHERS
5	AMERICAN ADOBO
6	CORKY ROMANO
7	BEHIND ENEMY LINES

METRO EAST 682-0115-16 / 683-7041

1	AMERICAN ADOBO
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4	LORD OF THE RINGS
5	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
6	MAHAL KITA . . .
7	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
8	ZOOLANDER

NOVALICHES 936-3229 TO 31

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	LORD OF THE RINGS
5	MAHAL KITA . . .
6	MAHAL KITA . . .
7	ZOOLANDER
8	AMERICAN ADOBO

IMUS (046) 471-0186

1	LORD OF THE RINGS
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	MAHAL KITA . . .
4	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
5	AMERICAN ADOBO
6	THE OTHERS

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 / 0459

1	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	GLASS HOUSE
4	GIRL FEVER
5	ON THE LINE
6	SPY GAME

ILOILO (033) 336-0077 / 0079

1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	SPY GAME
3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	AMERICAN ADOBO
5	EARTHQUAKE
6	WALANG IWANAN

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	MAHAL KITA : FINAL ANSWER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	AMERICAN ADOBO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	CORKY ROMANO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	THE OTHERS
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	H'WAG KANG KIKIBO / ORIGINAL SIN
ODEON	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
ODEON-2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
ROBEN	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	THE HOLE / EARTHQUAKE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	BUKO PANDAN
REMAR	MAHAL KITA: FINAL ANSWER
REMAR-2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	MAHAL KITA FINAL ANSWER
B	
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	636-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CORKY ROMANO
CINEMA-2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BAGONG BUWAN
CINEMA-2	BUKO PANDAN
CINEMA-3	AMERICAN ADOBO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BURLESK KING
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
CINEMA-6	HUBOG
CINEMA-7	YAMASHITA
CINEMA-8	WALANG IWANAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	ZOOLANDER
CINEMA-12	LORD OF THE RINGS
CINEMA-14	SPY GAME
CINEMA-15	AMERICAN ADOBO
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	ZOOLANDER
CINEMA-2	CORKY ROMANO
CINEMA-3	AMERICAN ADOBO
CINEMA-4	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
CINEMA-5	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
CINEMA-6	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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2	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
3	ZOOLANDER
4	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
5	THE OTHERS
6	MAHAL KITA . . .
7	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
8	LORD OF THE RINGS
9	AMERICAN ADOBO
10	CORKY ROMANO
11	BURLESK KING
12	BUKO PANDAN

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2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	ZOOLANDER
4	LORD OF THE RINGS
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6	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
7	ON THE LINE
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9	MAHAL KITA . . .
10	CORKY ROMANO
11	GLASS HOUSE
12	AMERICAN ADOBO

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8	ZOOLANDER
9	AMERICAN ADOBO
10	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
11	MAHAL KITA . . .
12	SPY GAME

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1	THE OTHERS
2	BEHIND EWNEMY LINES
3	MAHAL KITA . . .
4	ZOOLANDER
5	AMERICAN ADOBO
6	CORKY ROMANO
7	LORD OF THE RINGS
8	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
9	BURLESK KING
10	SPY GAME
11	BUKO PANDAN
12	OCEAN'S ELEVEN

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2	LORD OF THE RINGS
3	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4	CORKY ROMANO
5	BURLESK KING
6	BUKO PANDAN
7	MAHAL KITA . . .
8	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
9	ZOOLANDER
10	AMERICAN ADOBO

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1	LORD OF THE RINGS
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	GLASS HOUSE
4	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
5	BURLESK KING
6	AMERICAN ADOBO
7	BATANG LANSANGAN
8	LORD OF THE RINGS

SM CITY ILOILO
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1	BRO
2	CLOSED
3	SPY GAME
4	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
5	EARTHQUAKE
6	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
7	CLOSED
8	WALANG IWANAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA
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1	LORD OF THE RINGS
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	ZOOLANDER
4	AMERICAN ADOBO
5	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
6	MAHAL KITA . . .

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1	AMERICAN ADOBO
2	ZOOLANDER
3	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
4	MAHAL KITA . . .

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1	AMERICAN ADOBO
2	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3	MAHAL KITA . . .

SM CITY TUTUBAN
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1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	AMERICAN ADOBO
3	MAHAL KITA . . .
4	BURLESK KING

SM CITY DAVAO
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1	OCEAN'S ELEVEN
2	BURLESK KING
3	BEHIND ENEMY LINES
4	WALANG IWANAN
5	AMERICAN ADOBO
6	GLASS HOUSE

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1
2
3
4

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SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

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Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: Some people say you don't deserve the acting award you got last year. What do you have to say to your detractors?

Movie star: They don't know what they're talking about—I did not only win, I won by the anonymous vote of the judges!

(You mean, nobody knows who they are?!)

* * *

Host: The way you captured the rebels has been criticized by some people. It was too violent, they say. Your reaction?

Official: No, not at all, absolutely contrary to reports, there was no violence occureding!

("Occureding"?—*bago yon, a.*)

* * *

Host: In the light of all the coup rumors floating around, are you confident of soldiers' support for the administration?

Official: Oh, *suretainly!*

(That's doubly sure!)

* * *

Host: Why do people say that you are a playboy?

Starlet: No more, one-woman-man *na ako ngayon.*

Host: *Talaga?* You have a girlfriend? Only one?

Starlet: Yes!

Host: Well, my advice is, *kung talagang mahal mo siya, mag-*considerate *ka na lang sa kanya!*

(Huh?)

* * *

Host: What do you have to say to your best friend who's celebrating his birthday today?

Guest: To my best friend, all I want for you is to be happy and have a good out!

(*Ano daw*?)

* * *

Host: Why don't you invite our viewers to see your new movie?

Star: Oh, yes, please make sure to watch my new movie, opening next week. *Iba talaga ito sa lahat kong mga pelikula—may istorya!*

(*Ibig mong sabihin, yung iba—wala*?!)

* * *

Host: How's your career coming along this year?

Guest: Oh, fine, everything's smell!

(What are you starring in—garbage?)

* * *

Host: What is your resolution this year?

Guest: No more fighting, peace to all!

Host: Peace—?

Guest: Yes, *ayaw ko na ng* confliction with anybody!

(Confliction? Wow!)

* * *

Host: How is your life abroad now with your foreigner-husband?

Guest: It's ok now, but before, there was a problem.

Host: Why, what was the problem?

Guest: His friends there thought I was a made-to-order bride!

(That's mail-order bride, dear . . . !)

* * *

'The Exchange'

ON "The Exchange" tonight (ABC 5, 9:30 p.m.) Manila girl **Sari Simon** changes places with Mindanao State University student **Tajmahal Sulaiman** and they learn a lot about each other's culture and lifestyle.

In this new season's shows (it started last Jan. 17), Sari learns how to weave mats and farm seaweed, while Taj gets exposed to the various aspects of TV production.

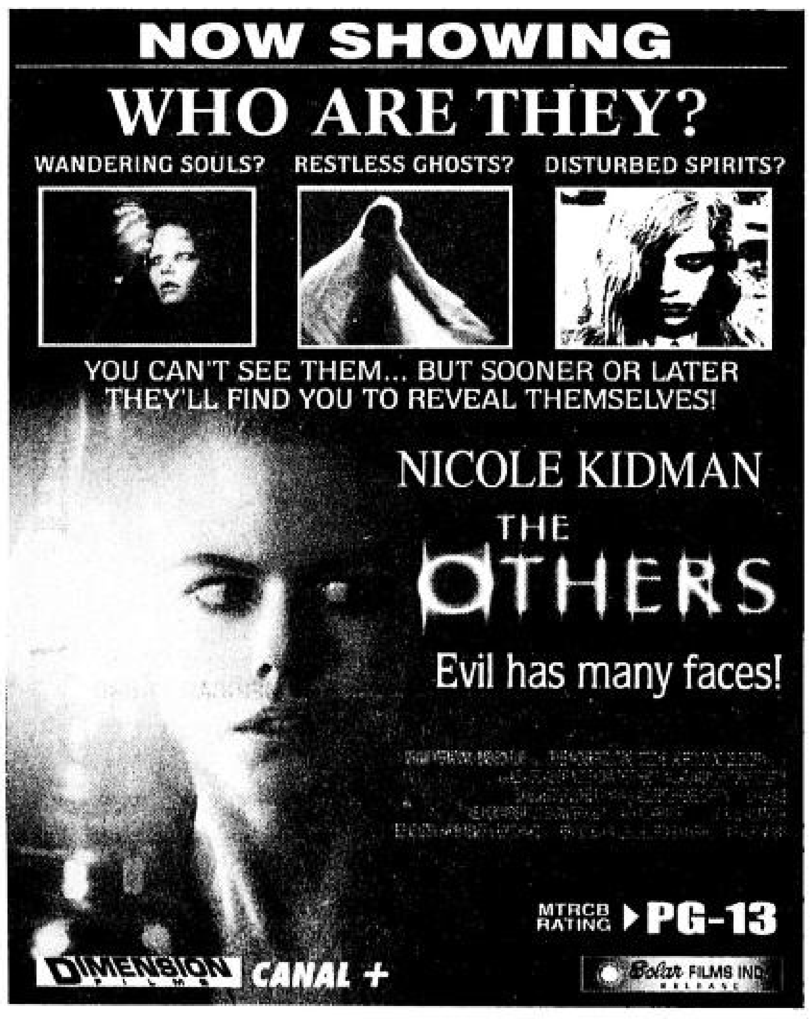
Some episodes have Sari visiting the Badjaos, exchanging views with elders, and interacting with Badjao women. For her part, Taj spends some time with the Aetas in Subic.

The hope is that this Mindanao-Manila, Muslim-Christian exchange will benefit not just Sari and Taj, but also viewers who will take to heart the show's search for commonalities in the midst of differences, so that they will become more understanding of and welcoming to other cultures and lifestyles in their own lives.

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

ZOOLANDER - P13 11:45, 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45, 9:45	CORKY ROMANO - P13 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30	AMERICAN ADOBO - R18 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
BEHIND ENEMY LINES - P13 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	OCEAN'S ELEVEN - P13 12:30, 2:55, 5:20, 7:45, 10:10	OCEAN'S ELEVEN - P13 11:30, 1:55, 4:20, 6:45, 9:10

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.



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WHO ARE THEY?
WANDERING SOULS? RESTLESS GHOSTS? DISTURBED SPIRITS?
YOU CAN'T SEE THEM... BUT SOONER OR LATER THEY'LL FIND YOU TO REVEAL THEMSELVES!
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THE OTHERS
Evil has many faces!
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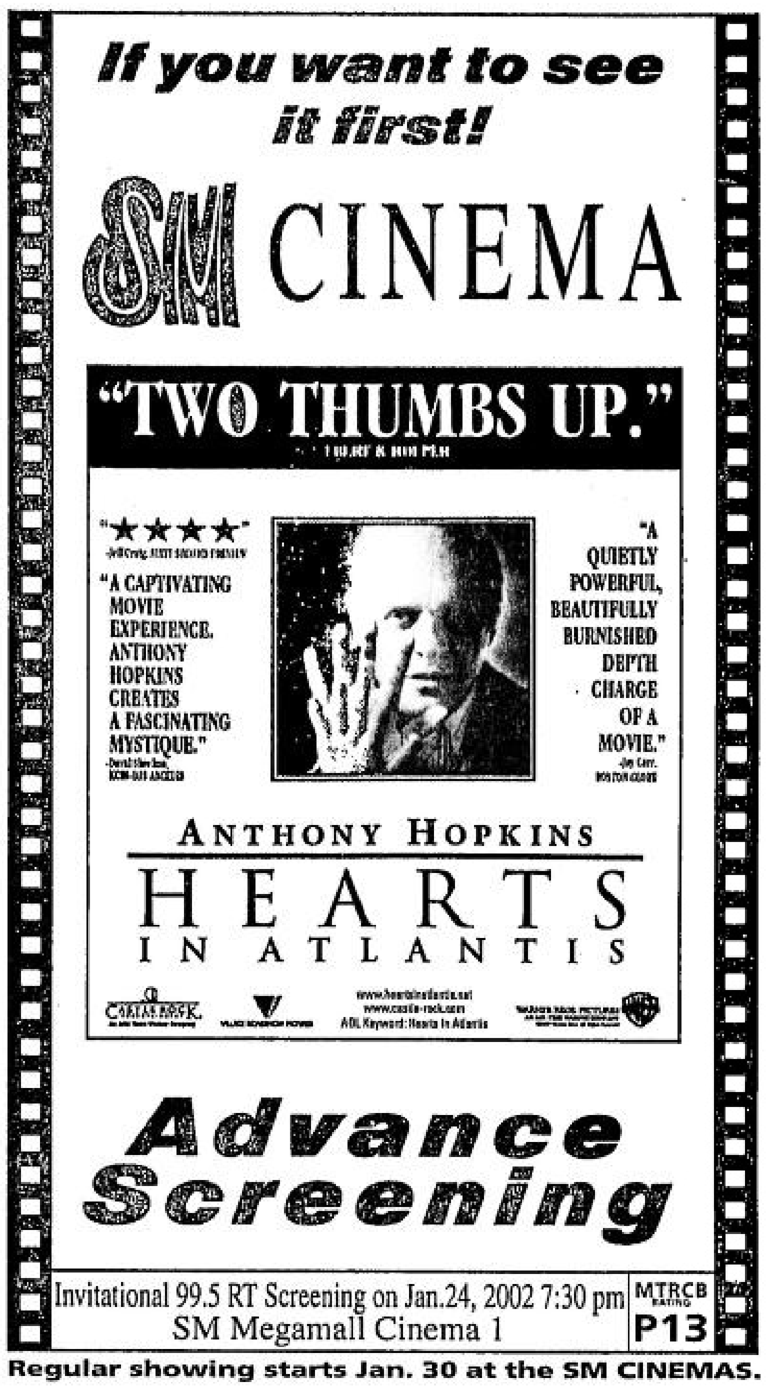

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"A QUIETLY POWERFUL, BEAUTIFULLY BURNISHED DEPTH CHARGE OF A MOVIE."
ANTHONY HOPKINS
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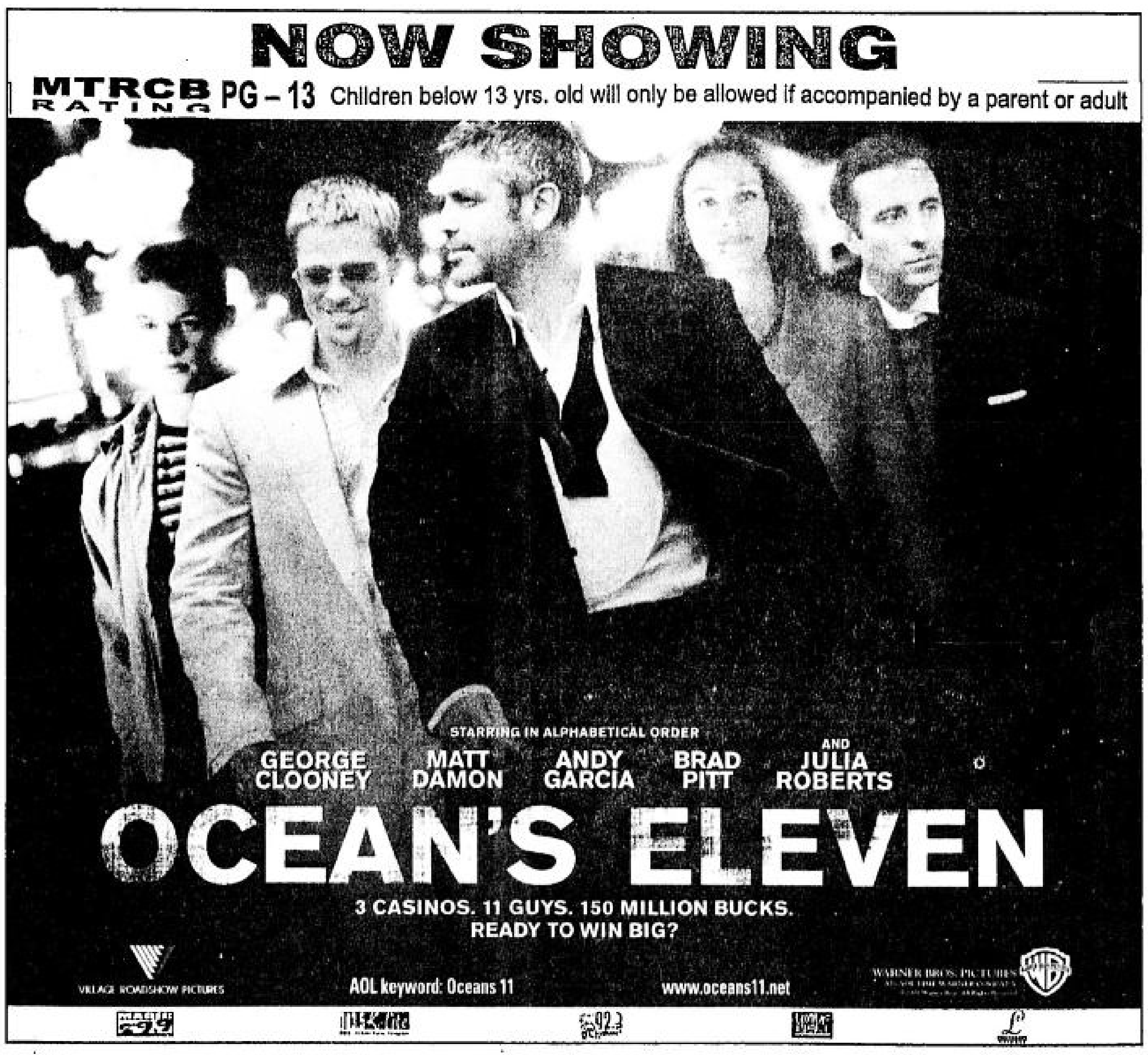
AOL Keyword: Hearts In Atlantis
Advance Screening
Invitational 99.5 RT Screening on Jan.24, 2002 7:30 pm
SM Megamall Cinema 1
MTRCB RATING P13
Regular showing starts Jan. 30 at the SM CINEMAS.



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MTRCB RATING PG – 13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
STARRING IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER
GEORGE CLOONEY MATT DAMON ANDY GARCIA BRAD PITT AND JULIA ROBERTS
OCEAN'S ELEVEN
3 CASINOS. 11 GUYS. 150 MILLION BUCKS.
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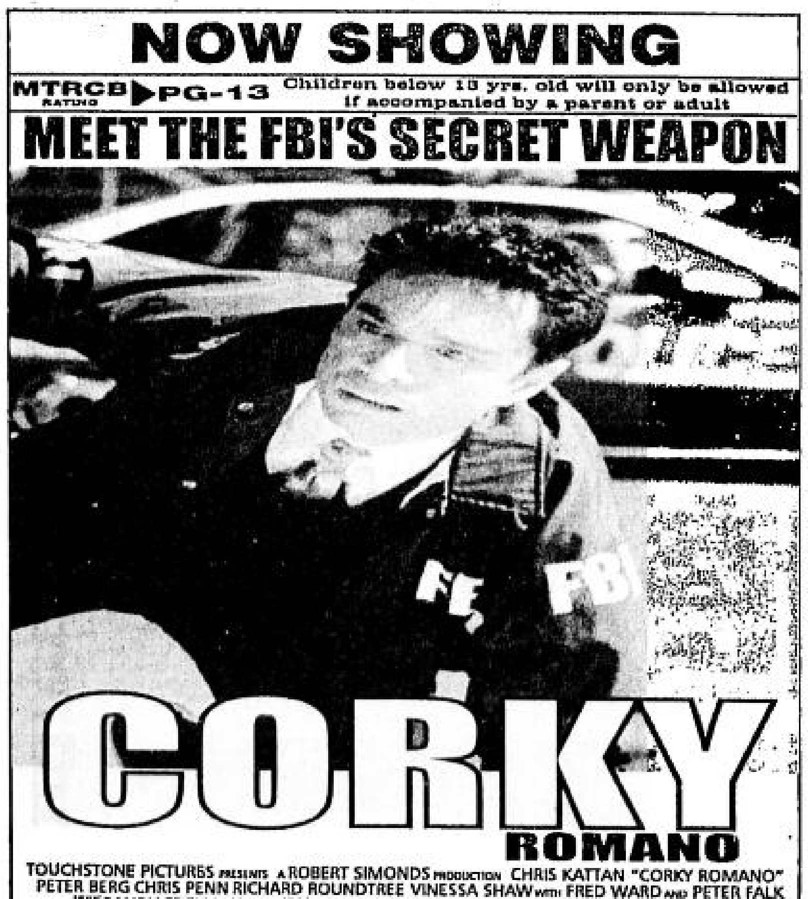

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MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
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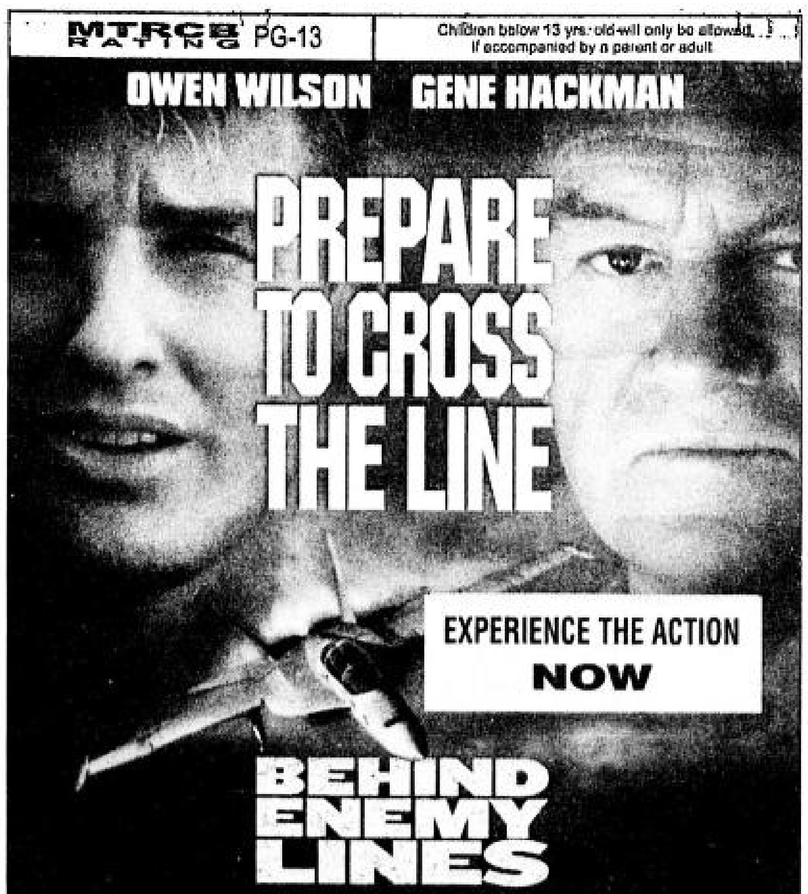
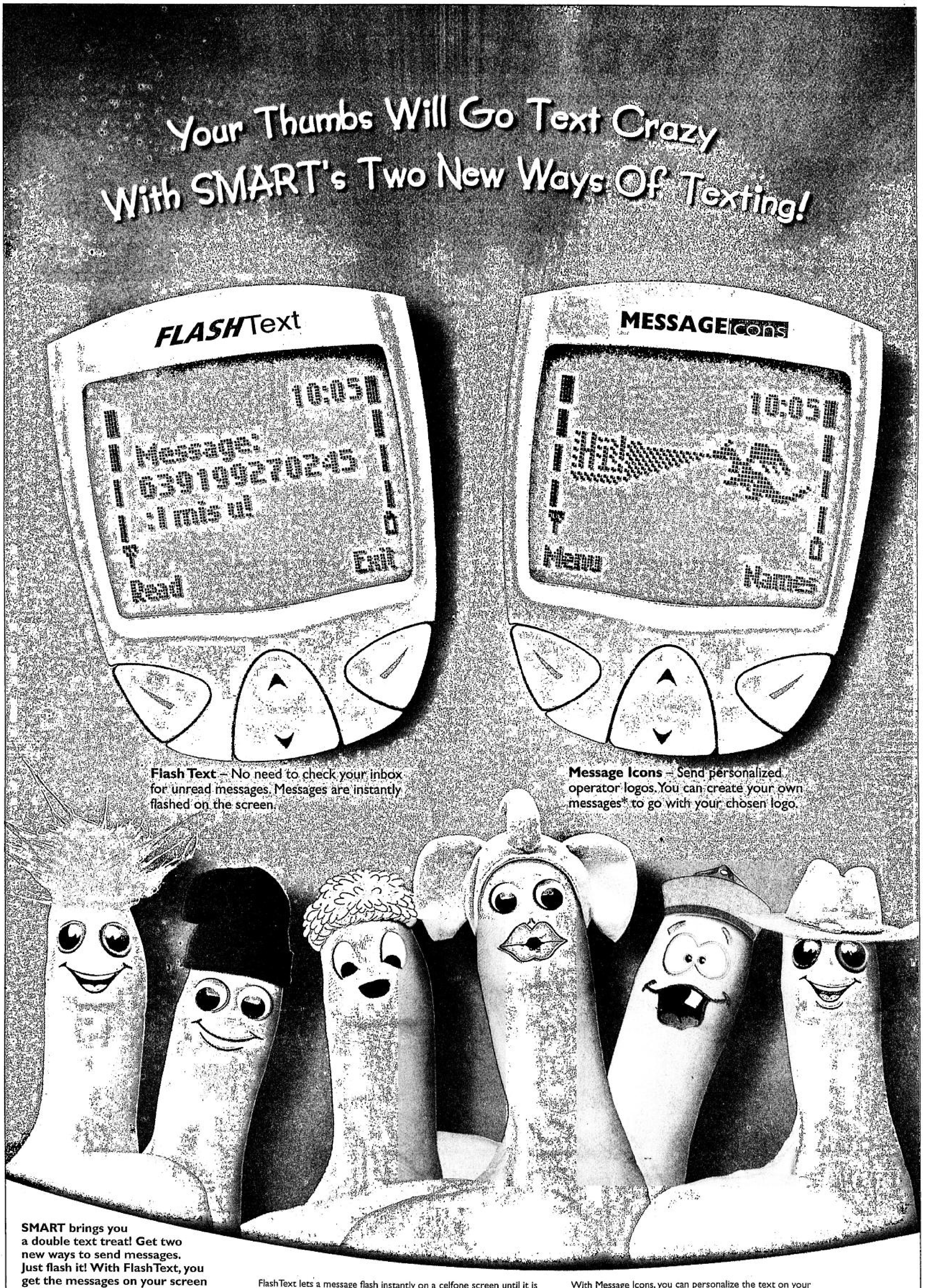
CORKY ROMANO
TOUCHSTONE PICTURES PRESENTS A ROBERT SIMONDS PRODUCTION CHRIS KATTAN "CORKY ROMANO"
PETER BERG CHRIS PENN RICHARD ROUNDTREE VINESSA SHAW WITH FRED WARD AND PETER FALK
RANDY EDELMAN LISA BROWN TOM BRONSON EDITOR ALAN CODY
PETER POLITANOFF STEVEN BERNSTEIN, A.S.C. TRACEY TRENCH
ROBERT SIMONDS IRA SHUMAN DAVID GARRETT & JASON WARD
ROB PRITTS
Touchstone Pictures
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures



MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
OWEN WILSON GENE HACKMAN
PREPARE TO CROSS THE LINE
EXPERIENCE THE ACTION NOW
BEHIND ENEMY LINES
SECOND WEEK !

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
GISELLE SANCHEZ GENEVA CRUZ JANETTE MCBRIDE LONG MEJIA
ANDREW E.
BURLES KING daw o...
Directed by Ipe Pelino



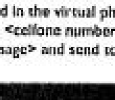
Flash Text – No need to check your inbox for unread messages. Messages are instantly flashed on the screen.

Message Icons – Send personalized operator logos. You can create your own messages* to go with your chosen logo.

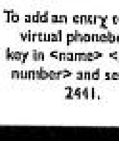
SMART brings you a double text treat! Get two new ways to send messages. Just flash it! With FlashText, you get the messages on your screen right away. No need to go through your inbox. Send Message Icons! Now, you can personalize the messages of the operator logos. It's text with the power of two--only from SMART!

**There will be a 12-character (including spaces) limit for Message Icon messages. Flash message service rates are P2.50/message sent and P12.00/operator logo downloaded or sent.*

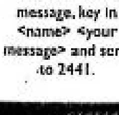
FlashText lets a message flash instantly on a celfone screen until it is read. Message senders also get virtual phonebooks so they don't have to enter phone numbers for every flash message sent.


09185501409
I mis u!

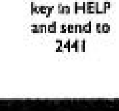
To send a flash message to someone whose name hasn't been entered in the virtual phonebook key in <celfone number> <your message> and send to 2441.


Paolo
09185501409

To add an entry to your virtual phonebook, key in <name> <phone number> and send to 2441.

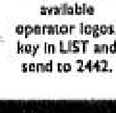

Paolo
I mis u!

To send a flash message, key in <name> <your message> and send to 2441.

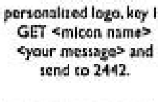

HELP

* To get help, key in HELP and send to 2441

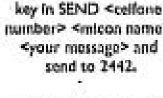
With Message Icons, you can personalize the text on your preferred operator logo.


LIST

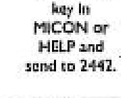
To get a list of available operator logos, key in LIST and send to 2442.


GET DRAGON
HI!

To download a personalised logo, key in GET <micon name> <your message> and send to 2442.


SEND
09185501409
DRAGON HI!

To send a personalized logo, key in SEND <celfone number> <micon name> <your message> and send to 2442.


HELP

To get help, key in MICON or HELP and send to 2442.

Powered by:
ayala

SMART
Simply Amazing!

BUSINESS

Raul O. Marcelo, Editor **Corrie S. Narisma**, Assistant Editor

Past-due credit card loans rising

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE EXPOSURE of banks in the credit card market has soared to P43.5 billion as of the third quarter last year, up 14 percent from P38 billion the previous quarter, an indication of an aggressive stance adopted by 18 commercial banks and 10 thrift lenders engaged in the business.

From a year ago, the exposure of the banking system in the credit card business had gone up by 33.8 percent from P32.56 billion, documents from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed.

Of the total, P9.63 billion had become past due or unpaid a month after the deadline as of September. This level was 34 percent higher than the previous quarter's P7.18 billion and 38.3 percent up from a year-ago past-due level of about P7 billion.

The 18 commercial banks actively engaged in the credit card business accounted for P42.4 billion of the total receivables or about 97.3 percent.

Foreign commercial banks, in particular, continued to account for 40 percent of the total credit card receivables. Among the more aggressive were Citibank, Standard Chartered Bank, and HSBC.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura had ordered banks actively engaged in the credit card business to review their operations following increasing complaints from the public about the stiff interest charges that lenders charge.

"We have received many complaints about the excessive interest rates they charge. Although I understand that they do this to make up for potential losses," the central bank chief said.

Buenaventura stressed that because of the aggressive marketing stance being done by banks in offering credit cards, some of them have been less stringent with their clients.

He pointed out that if banks would be more discriminating in taking in new credit card clients, they would have an easier time collecting.

"If they would choose their customers, then the good payers need not subsidize the delinquent ones. They should not let the good creditors pay for the shortcomings of the bad ones," he said.

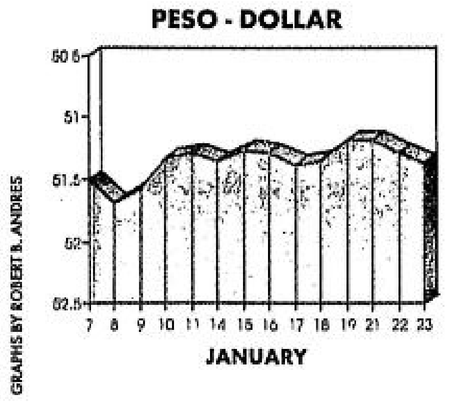
Buenaventura encouraged banks to start rationalizing their credit card activities before consumer groups demand for more protection from the law.

The central bank chief explained that credit card operators normally write off credit card loans after 90 to 180 days, pushing their interest charges higher because of the loan provisions they have to set aside.

"Let us say they charge about 3 percent, then half of it is set aside for provisions. But still, I am saying it is irresponsible to charge excessive fees," he noted.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

P 51.360 = $1

As of 5 p.m.,
Jan. 23, 2002

Y 133.88 = $1

As of 5 p.m.,
Jan. 23, 2002

GOLD:$281.50/282

per ounce Hong Kong,
Jan. 23, 2002

CURRENCIES

Jan. 22, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.128286	1.000000	51.2430
Japan	Yen	0.008431	0.007472	0.3829
United Kingdom	Pound	1.612547	1.429200	73.2365
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.144838	0.128370	6.5781
Switzerland	Franc	0.679281	0.602047	30.8507
Canada	Dollar	0.701452	0.621697	31.8576
Singapore	Dollar	0.613299	0.543567	27.8540
Australia	Dollar	0.585514	0.518941	26.5921
Bahrain	Dinar	2.992961	2.652661	135.9303
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.300877	0.266667	13.6648
Brunei	Dollar	0.613533	0.543774	27.8646
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000108	0.000096	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.025556	0.022650	1.1607
UAE	Dirham	0.307267	0.272331	13.9551
Korea	Won	0.000861	0.000763	0.0391
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.886300	45.4167
Brazil	Real	0.474070	0.420168	21.5307
Denmark	Kroner	0.134597	0.119293	6.1129
India	Rupee	0.023506	0.020833	1.0675
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.296995	0.263227	13.4885
Mexico	New Peso	0.123377	0.109349	5.6034
New Zealand	Dollar	0.484867	0.429738	22.0211
Norway	Kroner	0.126320	0.111957	5.7370
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018742	0.016611	0.8512
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032227	0.028563	1.4637

Clark Telecom taps Bayan Trade

CLARK Telecom Inc., a subsidiary of dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., has adopted an online materials and equipment acquisition system to cut cost and eliminate inefficiencies.

This online acquisition is done through BayanTrade's BuySite application. BayanTrade is a dotcom company that offers an eProcurement system to different companies for their goods and services over the Internet.

"eProcurement enables us to reduce cost and streamline our procurement process by eliminating too much paperwork. This reduces canvassing and processing time, thus enabling us to meet the deadline for these requests," Clark Telecom finance head Carol Sicat said in a statement yesterday.

With . BayanTrade's eProcurement service, the telecommunications firm now orders office personal computers, other office equipment and even company vehicles over the Internet.

US firm putting up call center in Clark zone

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AMERICAN telemarketing specialist Reese Brothers will put up a state-of-the-art call center at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone as a back up for its core business in the United States.

Reese Brothers will invest P20 million to convert the ballroom and hotel rooms of the Crown Peak Hotel into its base of operations and acquire cutting-edge telecommunication equipment. The project is expected to generate 2,000 new jobs in the first two years of operation.

Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said the government was pushing for information technology projects not only because of their investment potential but also because of their job-creation potential.

Reese Brothers chief executive officer and cofounder Ralph Reese took note of the Filipinos' ability to speak English and operate computers that are critical in the telemarketing business. "I am confident the Filipinos are the right kind of workers we need."

Reese Brothers is one of the 10 largest private teleservices firms in the country. It prides itself in selecting choice sites for its call centers, allowing it to maximize top quality talent in an area.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito C. Payumo said Reese Brothers chose Subic because of its abundant supply of skilled personnel, adequate housing facilities for employees and managers, and its three-way global connectivity—through fiber optic cable network, satellite transmission system, and microwave up-link services.

The Subic call center will duplicate the operations of Reese Brothers' 14 call centers in the United States that handle inbound voice, e-mail and online chat inquiries and telemarketing services.

Reese Brothers has signed a lease agreement with Crown Peak Estate Developers Inc.'s Anthony Trillo who agreed to remit half of the rent to SBMA. This will cover the unpaid dues of Crown Peak to SBMA.

REHAB PROGRAM

Gov't vow PNB profitability

THE GOVERNMENT said yesterday the Philippine National Bank would be out of the red in the first year of its rehabilitation.

"There is a chance that the bank will start posting positive numbers, or at least manage to break even during the first year of the rehabilitation that will start very soon," PNB chair Norberto Nazareno, concurrent head of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., said.

The bank has been a consistent money loser. Two years ago, it registered a net loss of P5.97 billion. A year before, its losses stood at P13.85 billion.

Before PNB's rehabilitation could begin, however, the government and the bank's majority owner, beer and tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan, must sign this week a memorandum of agreement on the conversion of P25-billion in state loans into equities in the bank.

Nazareno, who was set to step down as chair of PNB soon, said the agreement would be signed on Friday. He said apart from the debt conversion deal, four other agreements would have to be forged between the government and Tan.

Set to be signed were the joint-sale agreement, an escrow agreement, a voting rights assignment and a financial assistance agreement.

Nazareno, who would remain as a director of the bank, said the joint sale covered an agreement between the government and Tan to sell their shares in the bank once it had recovered financially.

Tan, however, has the option to buy the 67-percent stake in PNB and will be obliged to purchase the remaining shares of the government.

The two parties will also forge a deal to put their combined shares in PNB in an escrow account.

"This agreement will facilitate the joint sale and means that, at any given time that the board deems appropriate, the sale could be done immediately," Nazareno explained.

He also noted that a special power of attorney would be executed by both parties so Tan could assign part of his voting rights to the government and both parties would have an equal voting rights corresponding to their 44.98-percent stake.

This agreement had to be forged, according to Nazareno, because the convertible preferred shares to be issued to the PDIC had no voting rights to ensure that its task as a regulator would not conflict with its ownership in PNB.

The last agreement to be signed by the government and Tan would be on the financial assistance that would cover the 10-year restructuring of P6.1 billion worth of liabilities of PNB to the government. *Clarissa S. Batino*

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, January 23, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	1,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	63	66.5	63	66	787,200
China Banking Corp.	560	560	560	560	160
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	15	15	15	15	4,000
Citystate Savings Bank	12.75	14	12.75	14	17,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	28	29.5	28	29.5	1,281,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	200	203	195	195	124,950
Philippine National Bank	65	65	65.	65	17,500
Phil. Savings Bank	27	28.5	27	28.5	1,400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.25	13.25	13	13	21,000
Security Bank Corp.	17.25	17.5	17.25	17.25	30,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.5	17.5	17	17	481,800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	268,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	10,250,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	220	240	220	240	40
Manulife Financial Corp.	1260	1260	1260	1260	1,510
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1015	1015	985	1010	3,710
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	28	29.5	28	29.5	128,400
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.47	0.49	0.46	0.46	5,390,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	665	670	665	665	6,680
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.03	0.031	0.029	0.03	16,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	80,000
Piltel	0.35	0.39	0.34	0.37	19,390,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.24	0.25	0.23	0.25	640,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	500	525	500	525	204,900
Ivantage Corp.	0.5	0.54	0.48	0.54	1,690,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	431,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	24	25.5	24	24.75	787,300
Manila Electric Co. B	36.5	39.5	36.5	38	3,284,400
Petron Corp.	1.94	2.02	1.92	1.98	21,710,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.87	0.9	0.87	0.9	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1	1	1	1	132,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.95	2.95	2.85	2.85	5,797,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	30,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.5	6.5	5.5	6.1	16,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	15,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	2,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	718,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.25	13.75	13.25	13.5	211,400
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	24	25	24	25	214,700
RFM Corp.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.85	8,680,000
San Miguel Corp. A	44.5	45	44.5	45	109,900
San Miguel Corp. B	57	59	57	59	409,100
Universal Robina Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	488,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg. A	0.72	0.72	0.69	0.7	170,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg. B	0.72	0.72	0.71	0.71	20,000
Ayala Corp.	6.1	6.4	6.1	6.3	15,512,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.58	1.76	1.58	1.7	4,033,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.75	12	11.75	12	900
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.88	0.85	0.88	290,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	199,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2	2	2	2	110,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.66	0.71	0.66	0.67	43,350,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.15	0.15	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.24	0.29	0.24	0.27	2,130,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	1,000,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.28	0.28	5,440,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.095	0.105	0.095	0.1	2,500,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.034	0.038	0.034	0.038	800,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.08	1.04	1.08	790,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	29	30	29	29.5	814,300
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	150,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.15	0.18	0.15	0.16	6,300,000
Ionics Inc.	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.3	77,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.54	1.62	1.54	1.62	810,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.36	1.4	176,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.016	1,500,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.79	0.83	0.79	0.82	9,270,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.36	0.33	0.35	8,880,000
Music Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.28	0.28	9,140,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.2	0.205	2,240,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	10,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.36	0.4	0.36	0.37	2,870,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.195	0.2	0.185	0.185	2,810,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.42	0.42	20,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	1,160,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	10,000
Pryce Corp.	0.065	0.065	0.06	0.06	18,700,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.43	0.46	0.42	0.46	3,800,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.54	270,000
Manila Jockey Club	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	28.5	30.5	28.5	30	1,358,900
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	700	700	700	700	190
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.9	1.92	1.88	1.88	343,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	650	650	650	650	6,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	10,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10	10	10	10	3,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.006	64,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	3,100,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.7	5.9	5.6	5.7	8,363,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	6,410,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.54	0.55	0.51	0.51	14,410,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.29	0.32	0.29	0.3	20,070,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.38	2.46	2.32	2.4	23,313,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.048	0.048	600,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	300,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	220,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.24	1,680,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	100,000
SM Development Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	40,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	20,488,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.08	0.085	0.08	0.0825	3,300,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	40,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.004	0.004	0.0038	0.004	29,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	5,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.033	0.035	0.03	0.03	68,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	140,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	1,100,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	7,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	4,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	6,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.018	0.018	8,200,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	1,220,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.018	0.019	8,800,000
Interport Res.	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	8,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	123,000,000
Pacifica	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	6,200,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.09	400,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.19	0.205	0.19	0.205	310,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	13,310,970	133,274,440.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	940,352,370	669,389,730.00
PRO	99,394,000	260,786,240.00
Mining	124,725,000	3,085,400.00
OIL	146,710,000	1,135,050.00
GRAND TOTALS:	1,324,492,340	1,067,670,860.00
AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	535.80	UP 12.67
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,803.33	UP 52.15
PRO	577.51	UP 16.67
Mining	1,120.05	UP 18.48
OIL	1.98	DOWN 0.04
All Shares Index	712.48	UP 7.36
Composite	1,317.39	UP 39.48

NO. OF ADVANCES: 62; NO. OF DECLINES: 28; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 36; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 126; NO. OF TRADES: 5,934

DISCLOSURES

EXPRESS Holdings Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of **JG Summit Holdings Inc.**, bought 200,000 of JG Summit's shares at P1.54 per share and 29,000 shares of **Universal Robina Corp.** shares at P4.40 per share.

***

CROWN Equities Inc. has rescheduled its stockholders' meeting from April 23 to May 31. It also has set its record date on March 30.

***

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. declared cash dividends of P0.50 per share on its Series A, I, R, W, AA and BB cumulative convertible preferred stocks in favor of stockholders of record as of Feb. 8. This is payable on Feb. 28. It also declared P0.50 in cash dividends on its Series B, F, Q, V and Z cumulative convertible preferred stocks in favor of stockholders of record as of Feb. 21 to be paid on March 27. A cash dividend of P0.000375 per share per day on its Series IV cumulative non-convertible redeemable preferred stock is to be paid on March 15 to stockholders of record as of Feb. 15. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

Oh my gas!

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THIS cute administration has a problem in the Malampaya natural gas project. Oh my gosh! And all along, everybody thought the project is a sure hit.

For the kingsize headache, Gloriaetta must thank the administration of Kuya Eddie, who is not exactly her best friend nowadays. So let me tell you the whole story.

Supposedly, the government is expecting a huge income from the Malampaya project. It only amounts to something like $10 billion.

That, at current exchange rate, comes up to about P500 billion. No administration has ever seen that kind of money from one single transaction. Really big money!

For the Department of Finance, or the DOF, for instance, raising P500 billion is like winning all the stupid game shows on television for the next 1,648 and a half years.

But the beauty of it all is, to raise the money, the DOF doesn't have to squeeze our last drop of blood. It also doesn't have to suffer and bear the voice of Kris Aquino.

It's not tax, anyway, because it's royalty. It's what the Dutch group Shell pays to our government for making money out of the natural gas which belongs to the people.

It's our government's cut in the project. Only, the DOF cannot get the entire $10 billion immediately. It is spread over the next 25 years or so. Enter the Whiz.

* * *

THE EVER imaginative Finance Secretary Jose Isidro "the Whiz" Camacho comes up with a bright idea. He wants to "securitize" the income from Malampaya.

His idea will allow this cute administration to get the money now, pronto. To us down here, it's simply similar to a salary advance—minus the sermon from the boss.

Anyway, Gloriaetta will be long gone by the time the government can get its dirty hand on all that $10 billion. This cute administration needs the money right away.

The Whiz has a big problem called the budget deficit. It's getting bigger. So how do you prime the economic pump without incurring a big deficit?

Simple—you don't. A lot of government spendings mean that the Whiz must contend with a bigger budget deficit, which is also bad for the economy.

Yet, at the same time, the government must continue to spend and spend, because at the moment, it's one good way to stimulate economic growth.

Somehow the Whiz must raise the money. Gloriaetta made promises to the poor in her Sona. She said she would visit them, and eat with them with her bare hands.

It was a coincidence, just a pleasant surprise, media people were present, with their television and still cameras, and it was like she's already campaining. Oops.

* * *

ANYWAY, even now that Jaime Cardinal Sin ordered her to avoid such chance encounters with the media, the Whiz still has a big headache in his bright idea.

Believe me, he cannot securitize the income from Malampaya just like that. The money is already tied up. It is hacked to the project proponent—the Shell group itself.

During the bubbly administration of Kuya Eddie, somebody stupid enough in DOF agreed to assign the government share in Malampaya as some sort of a collateral.

It is called the "take or pay" deal. It says that if the supposed users of the gas, meaning the electric companies, do not buy the gas, the DOF pays for everything. Nice!

So who in this world is crazy enough to buy the "securities" of the Whiz, when they are backed up by something that's already pledged to somebody else? Oh my gas!

That's precisely what the Whiz is trying to solve. He told me so yesterday over the radio. It's dzAR, or 1026 khz on your dial. Sorry, I can't resist the chance.

The Whiz said that the financial advisers of the DOF is still trying to figure out a way to securitize the income, despite the "take or pay" deal.

I'm sure he can come up with something. As an investment banker, forgodsakes, he's creative. He can even find a way to make peace with the Dancing Queen.

* * *

SILENTLY, without much ado, this cute administration already entered into a contract with a Canadian company for the extension project of the LRT.

It's that train system between Monumento in Caloocan City and Baclaran in Pasay City. The extension project will stretch it all the way to Cavite. Good project.

The project is a joint venture between the Light Rail Transit Authority and the Canadian firm SNC Lavalin. Guess who's going to Canada next week!

Anyway, Rep. Willie Villarama of Bulacan has several questions regarding the project. He said the contract was done so secretly, nobody knows what's in it.

Now Villarama used to be the chief of staff of Sen. Blas Ople. Also, he served as chief of staff of then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who is now more popularly known in my family as Gloriaetta.

Villarama hinted that other groups were interested in doing the project. Because it was done with a lot of hush-hush deal, he warned of impending lawsuits.

For example, Villarama wanted to know what made the LRTA choose the Canadian firm as its joint venture partner. What were the . . . er, "considerations?"

Villarama is also not certain who got the contract to build the structure, plus who got the supply contract for the train system. Why all that silence?

In other words, Villarama wants this cute administration to open the deal to public scrutiny. Hmm. I smell something fishy in the DOTC. Again? Will it never end?

Fil-Hispano seeks debt relief

By Doris C. Dumlao

FIL-HISPANO Holdings Corp. is asking its creditor-banks to restructure its current liabilities amounting to P85.4 million. This developed after the company suspended debt servicing last September in view of the difficult economic environment.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the company said its management has been finalizing new business ventures and would seek the approval of the creditor-banks in line with the proposed restructuring.

The suspension of debt payments late last year was aimed at maintaining liquidity while the company was exploring new projects.

Formerly known as Fil-Hispano Ceramics Inc., which was incorporated in 1952, the company used to manufacture mosaic or vitrified tiles, brick refractory, sanitary wares and other products. However, it was forced to shut down its manufacturing facilities as operations turned unprofitable.

The management of Fil-Hispano now intends to explore new opportunities in the Internet, media, communications, leisure and entertainment businesses.

Apart from its current liabilities, Fil-Hispano also has about P42.25 million in long-term debts. The company has an authorized capital of P750 million.

Fil-Hispano incurred losses before income tax of P17.3 million for the nine months ending September 2001, down from P27.2 million in the same period the previous year.

Interest and financing charges for the nine months surged by 26 percent to P16.3 million. There was an increase in the accounts payable due to the deferral of interest and principal payments of loans.

Ayala taps StanChart to arrange $100-M loan

By Elena R. Torrijos

AYALA Corp., the holding company of the Ayala family, has mandated UK-based Standard Chartered Bank to arrange a $100-million syndicated loan for the pre-funding of next year's maturing obligations, industry sources said.

A senior executive of Ayala Corp. confirmed that the company had reached an agreement with a bank to do a $100-million loan syndication. He, however, did not elaborate.

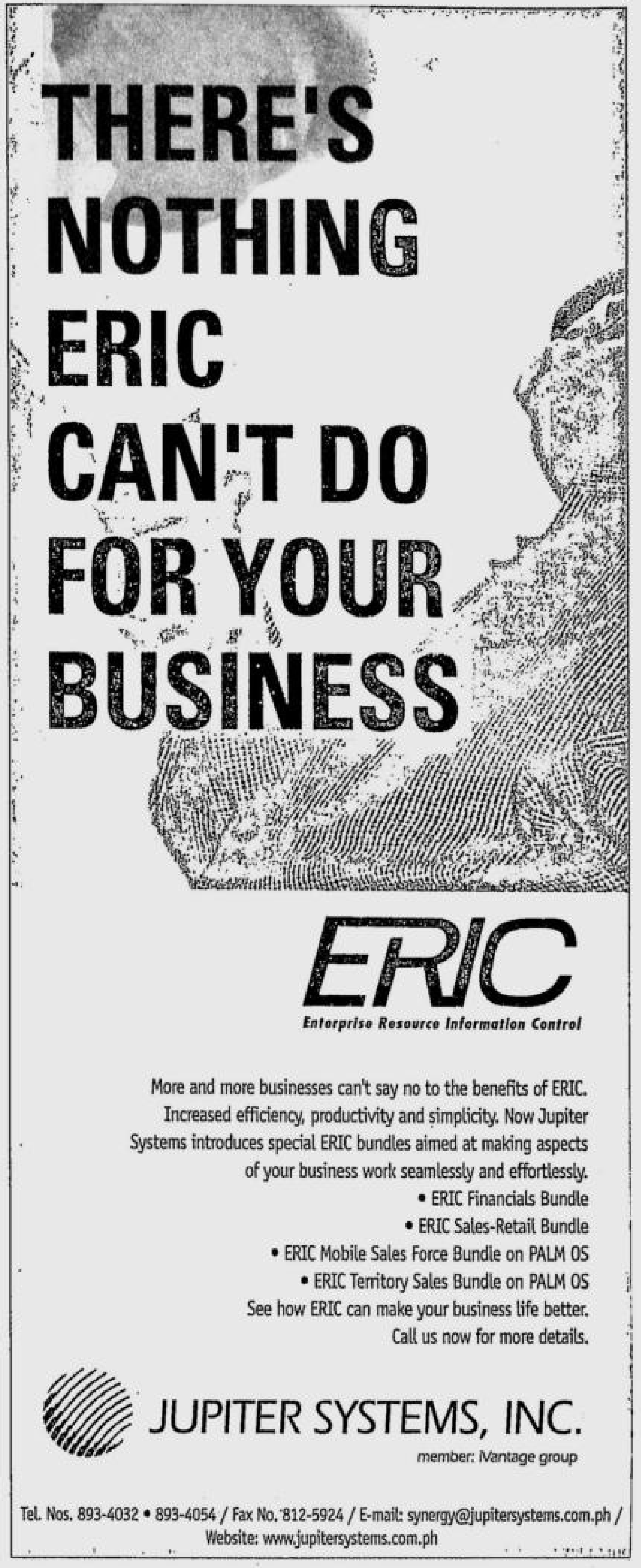
The borrowing will have a five-year maturity. It will be structured as an amortizing loan with an average life of more than three years. An amortizing loan is one whose principal payments are made before maturity.

Ayala Corp. is targeting a spread of 285 basis points over London Interbank Offer Rate or LIBOR with the underwriting fee and other charges included in the cost.

Last November, the holding company retired about $170 million worth of debts using part of its cash hoard of P27 billion from retained earnings and the proceeds from the sale of Pure Foods Corp.

The retirement of these debts, a combination of fixed- and floating-rate loans contracted in 1996, left Ayala with $762 million in outstanding liabilities as of last year.

Some $212 million in debts will fall due in July this year. Company officials said that with its current cash balance, Ayala Corp. could easily pay off the amount.



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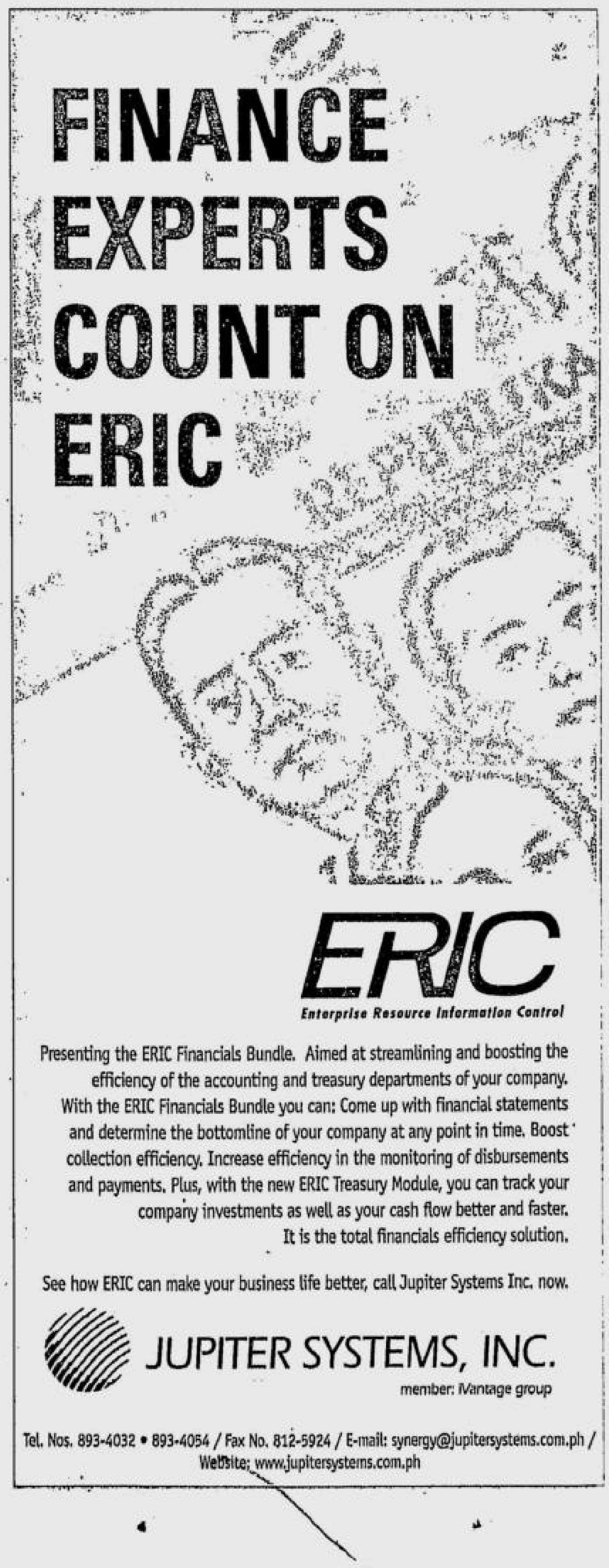

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40% hike in fruit exports set

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is seeking to raise by over 40 percent the country's exports of fresh and processed fruits and vegetables to $1.25 billion in 2004.

Based on a business plan prepared by units led by the Bureau of Export and Trade Promotion, the trade department would give priority to the development of fresh food products, such as banana, mango, pineapple, asparagus and onions, and processed food items, such as preservatives, dried goods, juices and concentrates.

Trade officials chose these products as export winners because of the country's strategic location, which made it closer to major markets for fruits and vegetables, such as Japan, compared with rival producers in South America.

The trade department also said the country offered a wider range of fresh and processed products, as well as world-class quality standards.

The DTI said government support for this sector was manifested in the Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Act, which granted favorable duties on farm equipment and inputs to boost agricultural productivity.

The fruits and vegetable exports account for 68 percent of the country's food exports—the balance is accounted for by sugar and coconut—and this is equivalent to 1.4 percent of the country's total exports.

Fresh and vegetable exports were expected to hit $873.60 million last year, with processed foods accounting for 55 percent. Bananas remained as the country's top fruit export, with $301.3 million sold in 2001, or 82 percent of total fruit exports.

The DTI, through the Board of Investments, has initiated a shift in investment promotion from manufacturing to agriculture projects because the latter has a bigger potential to create more jobs.

SSS presses bid to raise members' contributions

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SOCIAL Security System yesterday called for support from the public for an increase in its members' contributions to avert its collapse by 2015.

In a presentation at the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines' seminar on the country's pension fund system, SSS Administrator Corazon de la Paz revealed that unsound benefit enhancements and improving life span of Filipinos against insufficient member contributions were depleting the SSS' resources.

She argued that an increase in the rate of contribution of its members and a delay in the retirement age were necessary for the SSS to be able to provide the pension benefits of its current 24 million members.

"We hope that through this forum we could get your support. If you don't give us this increase, you will not receive your pension money when you retire," she warned.

No date had been set for the contribution rate increase, according to De la Paz, because the SSS was still trying to convince President Macapagal-Arroyo of the need.

The SSS will also still have to convince Congress to approve it.

"We really need to get a lot of support. We hope to generate willingness on the part of the public, particularly labor, so we can move forward," De la Paz said.

"People have to face facts that we have a problem, and if we can't make pension payments, then we will really be in trouble. The political implications of this must be aligned with the economic reality," she stressed.

At present, SSS members, with counterpart funding from employers, contribute 8.4 percent of at least P1,000 of their monthly salaries to the SSS.

The SSS, through investments and cost management, is supposed to build up the contributions to provide pensions to members who retire by age 60.

De la Paz said contributions were so low and benefits, which were increased by Congress in 1997, were so high that up to 2065, the national government itself would have to be shouldering P1.2 trillion in SSS liabilities.

She noted that in 1990, before benefits had been increased, the SSS fund had been expected to last to perpetuity.

Because of the benefits increases over the past decade, however, even for a one-time contribution of just P84, a tricycle driver can already demand a P20,000 death benefit.

In an actual case, De la Paz said a pensioner that paid P26,349 in contributions over a 40-year period that earned an investment income of P108,050 was given benefits of P1.3 million, resulting in a P1.2-million subsidy.

ROW OVER KOREA FLIGHTS

Cebu Pacific to use 'legal remedies'

By Abigail L. Ho

CEBU Pacific Air said yesterday that it was "prepared to exhaust all legal remedies" to keep rival carrier Philippine Airlines Inc. from grabbing two of its Seoul flight entitlements.

In a news briefing, Cebu Pacific legal affairs director Racquel Ruiz-Dimalanta said the airline could bring the issue to the Court of Appeals, if necessary.

Cebu Pacific has rejected Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez's proposal that it split evenly the four new entitlements granted by the South Korean government with PAL.

Cebu Pacific vice president for corporate planning and external affairs Peggy Vera said it would not be viable for Cebu Pacific to fly only twice weekly.

"If you're alone on the route, it would be reasonable to fly only twice weekly. But PAL would have 15, Korean airlines have 13 plus rights to four more and Cebu Pacific would have only two," she said.

The Civil Aeronautics Board gave Cebu Pacific three weekly flights to South Korea on Dec. 19.

Vera told reporters that Cebu Pacific asked the CAB for all four entitlements considering PAL opposed talks between Manila and Seoul so that the Philippines could secure more flight schedules to South Korea.

"Since PAL objected to the acquisition of additional frequencies, we asked the CAB on Nov. 30 to give us all four frequencies that the country got as a result of the RP-Korea amended air service agreement," she disclosed.

When the CAB handed Cebu Pacific its formal certification on Dec. 27 granting the airline three weekly flights to South Korea, PAL changed its tune. It sought to secure two of the four new frequencies.

Ruiz-Dimalanta said, however, that PAL failed to file its opposition within the 15-day deadline it was entitled to. The 15-day period, which started on Dec. 19 when the CAB signed Cebu Pacific's designation, ended on Jan. 3. PAL filed its opposition six days after that.

Gov't to sink ₱20B into economy

THE MACAPAGAL administration has pledged to infuse at least P20 billion into the domestic economy each year through public investments in various modernization programs until the end of its term in 2004.

In a statement, the National Economic and Development Authority said yesterday that the planned public investments were part of the administration's Medium-Term Philippine Development Program.

The blueprint sought to flesh out, among others, the modernization of the agriculture and fisheries sectors to create a million new jobs in the countryside within the next three years.

"Based on the MTPDP, the implementation of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act and the Fisheries Code have paved the way for the private sector to invest in the agriculture and fisheries sectors and, in so doing, create more jobs in the rural areas," Neda said.

Under the MTPDP, the agricultural crops sub-sector should grow annually by an average of 2.4 to 3.6 percent within the period, of which traditional crops such as rice, corn, coconut and sugarcane were expected to post moderate growth of 2 to 3 percent.

Growth in the crops sub-sector is expected to be led by high-value and export crops, such as tropical fruits and vegetables. This sub-sector is seen to register an average annual growth of 3.4 to 5.7 percent over the medium term.

The MTPDP has also plotted specific infrastructure targets to support rural development:

- Irrigation of 473,752 hectares of land;
- Construction of about 1,597 kilometers of new farm to market roads;
- Distribution of 21,863 post-harvest machinery and equipment; and,
- Construction of 14,810 assorted post-harvest infrastructures to benefit some 3 million farmers.

Over the medium term, the annual growth rates of the livestock and poultry sub-sectors are projected at 4.1 to 4.6 percent and 4.2 to 5.1 percent on the average, respectively.

The hog and chicken industries, mainly private sector-led and driven by growth in the domestic demand, are projected to lead the growth in the sector at 4.1 to 4.7 percent and 4.1 to 5.2 percent, respectively.

Meanwhile, the fisheries sub-sector is projected to post an average annual growth of 3.8 to 3.9 percent, led by the aquaculture industry, which is targeted to grow by an average of 7.6 percent annually. Municipal fisheries are also seen to stabilize while commercial fisheries grow by an average of 3.1 to 3.6 percent annually.

The MTPDP noted that the rural sector accounted for half of the country's population and 77 percent of the poor. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Chinatrust to beef up consumer portfolio

CHINATRUST Philippines Commercial Bank Corp. has launched a program to build a strong consumer portfolio consisting of housing, auto and personal loans.

"If our consumer portfolio takes off very well, then we will look at (issuing long-term certificate of deposits) to fund the growth. We will look at a peso issue," Chinatrust president Joey Bermudez said.

So far, only Standard Chartered Bank of the United Kingdom has sought the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' permission to issue P3 billion worth of long-term certificate of deposits to expand its retail banking operations.

Bermudez said a long-term issue would enable Chinatrust to ride on soft interest rates and bring down its overall funding costs.

He said in terms of earnings, the bank would post at least another 20-percent growth this year over last year's figure.

The bank has been reportedly on track to post a 20-percent growth in 2001 over the P200.8-million profit it registered the year before. *Elena R. Torrijos*

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2 units	Back Hoe (0.70 cu.m.) 79 HP Truck Type (Brand New)
2 units	Road Grader, 135 HP (Brand New)
2 units	Pay Loader, 105 HP. 2.5 cu.m. (Brand New)

Schedule of Activities	Date	Time
Issuance of Bid Documents	January 28 - February 5, 2002	
Deadline for Submission of Bids	February 18, 2002	5:00 PM
Pre-Bid Conference	February 19, 2002	10:00 AM
Opening of Bids	February 19, 2002	1:30 PM

All activities shall be held at the Provincial General Services Office, Provincial Capitol, Dipolog City, unless announced otherwise.

Suppliers/Dealers who are interested to participate in this bidding may obtain the bid documents from the PGSO upon presentation of the Official Receipt for payment made to the Provincial Treasurer's Office of a non-refundable amount of Php 500.00.

All bids must be accompanied with a Bid Security in an amount equivalent to five percent 5% of the total bid proposal either in Cash/Manager's Check/ or Surety Bond issued by the GSIS.

The government reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects or informalities found therein and accept the offer found to be most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ERLINDA M. VIDAL**
Provincial Budget Officer
OIC-PGSO

APPROVED:

(Sgd.) **ISAGANI S. AMATONG**
Provincial Governor

(PDI – Jan. 24, 2002)

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NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION
Office of the Management Team
Diversion, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija
Telephone No. (044) 311-2135
Telefax No. (044) 486-3668

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

NEA Management Team (NMT) invites suppliers to apply for pre-qualification and if subsequently found qualified to bid for the SUPPLY AND DELIVERY of the following materials intended for the construction of electrical line (14.7 kms.) of Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) Stock Farm at Gen. Tinio, Nueva Ecija:

200 pcs. - Poles, 35'
150 pcs. - Anchor Logs, 8" x 4"
370 pcs. - Cross Arms, 3½" x 4½" x 8"

Pre-bid will be on February 4, 2002 at exactly 10:00 a.m. at NMT Main Office, Diversion, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija. For additional inquiries, please call the PBAC Secretariat at Cellphone Nos. (0918) 755-0932 or (0917) 944-7123.

(Sgd.) **JOSE V. CABANELA**
NMT-PBAC Chairman

(PDI -- Jan. 23, 24 & 25, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry & Investments Building
385 Gil J. Puyat Avenue
Makati City
Fax No. 8954024
Tel. Nos. 8976682
8901332

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **SHAN TAN CORPORATION** with office address at 117 Lalakhan Street, Sta. Mana, Bulacan for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as amended, as New Export Producer of Garments at a capacity of 25,000 dozens per year with plant site at same as above has been officially accepted on January 15, 2002 and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 15th day of January 2002.

(Sgd.) **FRANCISCO C. CHAVEZ**
OIC - Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI -- Jan. 24, 2002)

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In Loving Memory of

Helen Gantioqui Moreno

who peacefully joined her Creator on 24 January 2001

Masses will be offered at:

AIM Chapel .... 12:30 p.m.
Makati City

Presentation of the Child Jesus Parish .... 7:00 p.m.
BF Homes, Parañaque

St. Benedict College Chapel .... 6:30 p.m.
Alabang, Muntinlupa

Our Lady of the Abandoned Parish .... 5:30 p.m.
Sta. Ana, Manila

St. Raphael Parish .... 6:30 a.m.
Legazpi City, Albay

Her husband **Ruy**; children **Marga & Henry Aquende**, and **Rodrigo**; relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Engr. BOANERJES R. DURAN

CHIEF, MARINE ENGINEER
FORMER CHAIRMAN AND MEMBER
Of the Board of Examiners for Marine Engineer
PROFESSIONAL REGULATION COMMISSION, MANILA
WORLD WAR II VETERAN

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 23, 2002 at the age of 85.

His wife **Placing** (†); children and their spouses **Rusell & Tito** (†), **Girlie & Joe, Mae & Rex, Lorna & Freddie, Wilma** (†), **Em & Vhie, Soc & Angel, Jun & Leyda**; grandchildren **Terence, Tiffany, Kevin, Jeffrey, Johanna, Gregory, RM, Joe, Michelle, Melissa, Cielo, Arvin, Adyel**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at 124 Guadalupe Street, Morning Breeze Subdivision, Caloocan City.

Interment will be announced later.

**I am
the way,
the truth
and
the life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.**
John 14:6

Our Dearly Beloved

ROSALINA ARAGON SALVADOR

At the age of 82, Rosing joined her Creator on January 22, 2002

Her loving son **ROSALINO "CHITO" SALVADOR** and wife **JEAN**; grandchildren **ANTONETTE** and husband **PAUL** and **MATTHEW**; great grandchildren **CLAIRE CONSTANCE** and **AUDREY JOSEPHINE**; sister **ESTHER S. BAUTISTA** and husband **DR. ARISTON BAUTISTA**; niece **ALICIA S.B. RAO** and husband **DR. MADU RAO**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at her residence.

Interment will be on January 26, 2002 at the Parañaque Catholic Cemetery, after the 2:00 PM Mass at St. Andrew Jubilee Church, Parañaque City.

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and the family of the late

REV. FR. TITO F. PATACSIL

who passed away on January 14, 2002 at the age of 44

wish to inform relatives, parishioners and friends that the body lies in state at the Sacred Heart Scholasticate No. 10, 17th Street, New Manila, Quezon City.

At 8:00 AM on Thursday, January 24, 2002, his body will be transferred to Sta. Quiteria Parish Church, Baesa Road, Kalookan City.

Interment will be on Friday, January 25, 2002 at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Kalookan City after the 2:00 PM Concelebrated Mass.

---

†††
S.T.3.P
J.M.J
†††

CONSUELO ARORONG VDA. DE REYES

(of Sigma, Capiz / Koronadal City, South Cotabato / Chicago, USA & Widow of the late Marcelo Y. Reyes)
December 16, 1911 - January 23, 2002 A.D.

Her children **Wilson** and **Connie**, **Daisy** and **Jesus**, **Henry** and **Valeta**, **Hector**, **Nancy** and **Carlos**, **Nymia**, **Fatima**, **Eddie** and **Nenet**; and grandchildren **Christopher**, **Wina** and **Omar**, **Agnes**, **Wendell**, **Cyril**, **Belinda**, **Michael**, **Harry Marcel** (**Marc**), **Harold Joseph**, **Carlo**, **Kristine**, **Joseph** and great grandchildren **Angelo** and **Marcelo** request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul. Her remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City. Interment will be on Sunday, January 27 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

"Eternal rest grant unto her, Oh Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon her.
May she rest in peace."

Save the World the Rosary Way, A Constant Vigil Prayer

Ina ng Saya - Ina ng Pilipinas OUR LADY OF JOY The Brown Mother & Patroness of Asia

---

Araceli J. Cristobal

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 22, 2002 at the age of 69.

Her loving children **Edgar** and **Amy**, **Vicky** and **Hernan**, **Sean** and **Beng** and **Tanie**; together with grandchildren, sisters, brother, relatives and friends...

Her remains lie in state at St. Martin de Porres Chapel, Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, January 25, 2002, after the 7:00 a.m. Mass at St. Martin de Porres Chapel, Sto. Domingo Church.

Our Dearly Beloved

Hera Dellosa-Elegado

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 22, 2002 at the age of 79.

Her loving husband **Ignacio E. Elegado;**

Sons:	**Earlmon** **Edwin**	Daughters-in-law:	**Rose** **Girlie**
Daughters:	**Eleanor** **Edna**	Son-in-law:	**Tan Kay Song**
Grandchildren:	**Raymond, Edghee, Wesley, Geraldine, Edeng, Gayle, Vans, Bryan, Vhien, Aica** and **JR.**		

Request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina Chapel.
Interment will be on 24 January 2002 at 1:00 p.m. at
Loyola Memorial Park Marikina City.

Our Dearly Beloved

COL. ENGRACIO S. GULIGADO PC GSC (Ret.)

of Siasi, Sulu and San Juan, Metro Manila

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 22, 2002 at the age of 87.

His bereaved and loving wife **GUN ENG TAN GULIGADO**; children and grandchildren.

Rudy and Tonette (†) **Winky** **Mikey**	**Ding and Carmen** **Dingson** **Tom**
Vovos and Lette **Marlon** **Pia** **Amboy**	**James** **Mar and Vangie** **Vicky**

Relatives and friends request all pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel 2A, Nacional Memorial Homes, 264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City on Saturday, January 26, 2002 at 12 o'clock noon.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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Tels. 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A.B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
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1305 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, Tel. 732-0309; 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch. A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu
Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City. Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City; Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258
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FUNERARIA TUASON
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79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337
LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City, Tels. 895-1011 to 19
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1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila, Tels. 522-8846, 522-9438, 400-5394

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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FELIZARDO "FITZ" ARREZA GERALDO

(November 13, 1919 - January 20, 2002)

EX-DIRECTOR U.S.I.S - For Leyte-Samar
Newspaper - Publisher/Editor - Mindanews

At the age of 82, Mano Fitz surrendered his soul to his Creator on January 20, 2002

His bereaved wife **ROSARIO ARAZA GERALDO**; children **GLENN & JASMIN, ROSARIO GRETA, GORDON & LINDA, GODWIN & VIRGINIA, LOLITA**; grandchildren **GEFF & BERNADETTE, GRETCHEN, IAMAI**, and **MEG**; great grandchildren **GOLDA MAY, GEMMA ALEXANDRA**; brothers and sisters, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends from **CARCANMADCARLAN** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 26, 2002 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City at 3:00 PM.

A posthumous Mass and Eucharistic Celebration will be held at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels at Sucat Road, Parañaque City where his remains lie, at 1:30 PM, before interment.

TRINIDAD G. DETERALA

May 15, 1915 - January 21, 2002

Her husband **Simeon** (†); children **Vacion, Pedro** (†), **Olive, Naro, Fe** (†), **Leling, Merle, Daning** and **Junior**; sons and daughters-in-law, and grandchildren request the pious readers to say prayers for the repose of her soul.

The body lies in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, St. Elizabeth Chapel, in Dr. A. Santos Avenue, Parañaque City.

Interment will be at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City on January 26, 2002 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Editor

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Sun announces beta version of StarOffice 6.0

SUN Microsystems Philippines Inc. recently announced that the beta version of StarOffice ™ 6.0 office productivity software is available for download on its Web site. The latest release builds upon Sun's vision to deliver a full-featured, low-cost office productivity suite that runs on Solaris ™ Operating Environment, Linux and Microsoft Windows machines, including XP. A significant step forward in the development of this type of cross-platform software, StarOffice is ideal for small businesses, educational institutions, government and enterprises with multi-platform needs or budget constraints looking for an affordable alternative. With more than 6 million customer downloads and more than tens of millions of users, StarOffice usability and compatibility are making it an increasingly popular choice for cost-conscious customers.

"In the face of decreasing IT budgets, StarOffice 6.0 provides users a high quality, low-cost choice for office productivity software," said Mike Rogers, Sun's vice president/general manager Webtop Applications Group. "We've developed the new features, interoperability and compatibility enhancements based on feedback from our existing users and the open-source developer community via OpenOffice.org."

StarOffice 6.0, now available in four key Asian languages, is designed to simplify the user experience and improve ease of file exchange. Utilization of the non-proprietary, open, publicly available Extensive Markup Language as the default file format allows anyone anywhere the ability to build or use widely-available tools to open, edit and save StarOffice files. Users will also enjoy more robust Microsoft Office import and export filters, including support for Office XP, redesigned dialog boxes, additional template, graphics, clipart and an enhanced and revamped help. The Asian language versions of StarOffice 6.0, known as StarSuite 6.0, add support for Korean, Japanese and Chinese (Simplified and Traditional) languages. Additionally, the integrated desktop has been removed to support the native desktop environment such as Gnome, CEO and Windows.

"All things considered, we saved over US$1,000 per employee by switching to the StarOffice suite. But tremendous value is only the beginning," says Tim Payne, vice president of the TMP Company. "Value is really important to us now while we're small, be we have ambitions of becoming a big company where saving costs is no longer so critical. Even then though, you can be we'll still be using StarOffice.

Members of the education industry agree. Buzz Eyler, director of Educational Technology in the Orcutt Union School District in Southern California, says "StarOffice software is meeting the needs of the Orcutt Union School District in many important ways. First, it is a very high-powered, full-featured set of programs that is easy to learn. Second, because of StarOffice software's value and low-cost, we are now able to do things we would otherwise not have been able to afford." There are already 17,000 customers registered for the StarOffice 6.0 beta program and the general release is scheduled for the first half of 2002.

TIP hosts inter-school events 4Q of 2001

THE TECHNOLOGICAL Institute of the Philippines (TIP) recently served as host to several inter-school student activities.

On Dec. 12, the National Architecture Quiz and Body Painting Contest sponsored by the United Architects of the Philippines Student Auxiliary (Uapsa) were held at the TIP Quezon City Campus PE Center. The following schools competed: Bulacan State University, Central Colleges of the Philippines, Earist, Feati, MIT, MLQU, Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, PLM, PUP, TUP, University of Pangasinan, University of Santo Tomas and TIP-Quezon City.

Winners in the Quiz were PLM (first place), TIP-QC (second and third). The body painting contest winners were TUP (first), TIP-QC (second) and MLQU (third).

On Dec. 6, the Inter-school Accounting Quiz Bowl, a project of the Junior Philippine Institute of Accountants (JPIA)-TIP QC chapter was held at the TIP-QC PE Center covered basketball court, with 22 colleges and universities joining. These were: University of the East-Manila, Far Eastern University, City College of Manila, UE-Caloocan, Polytechnic University of the Philippines-Taguig, Adamson University, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, St. Paul College-QC, NCBA-Cubao, Jose Rizal University, Central Colleges of the Philippines, Miriam College, New Era University, NCBA-Fairview (first place), Manila Central University, De La Salle University, PUP-Sta. Mesa (third), UST (second), PSBA-QC, Philippine Christian University, Pasig Catholic College, and Rizal Technological University.

On Nov. 28 and 29, the TIP PSME Student Unit coordinated the semifinal and final inter-school basketball tournament at the TIP-QC Congregating Area where TIP QC beat Feati in the championship round. The tournament was participated in by De La Salle University, PUP (third place), National University, West Bay College, St. John Technological College, New Era University, Technological University of the Philippines, and Eulogio Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology.

On Aug. 31, the 15th Annual NCR Regional Quiz Show and the 3rd Regional Math Wizard of the Integrated Institute of Electrical Engineers (IIEE) were conducted at the 6th floor of the Arlegui Campus, TIP Manila. The quizzers were representatives from 21 IIEE affiliated schools from Metro Manila, namely Adamson University, Alejandro Colleges, Central Colleges of the Philippines, Earist, FEU, Feati, Gregorio Araneta University Foundation, Lyceum of the Philippines, MLQU, MIT, NU, NEU, PLM, PUP, RTU, Roosevelt College, Sumulong Unit, SJTCP, TUP-Manila and QC, University of Perpetual Help-Rizal, UST and UE-Caloocan.

SWI WINNERS POSE

The winners of the Mr and Ms Slimmers World Great Bodies 2001, Jackie Lou Blanco-Davao (hand-in-hand with proud daughter) and Albert Genato of SWI Megamall, pose with Bopeep Arroyo, SWI Megamall director, and her staff.

A special raffle for KIDS
BOEHRING INGELHEIM (PHIL.), INC.
23F TOWER, MAKATI CITY

MARK ANGELO'S EDUCATION SECURED

Kiddi Pharmaton recently awarded 44 winners in the multivitamin brand's second Special Raffle for Kids. The first prize, a Prudentialife Educational Plan worth almost P600,000, went to Mark Angelo Catacutan of Tarlac, shown here with proud parents Nomelia and Diomedes Catacutan. Awarding Mark Angelo's prize are (from left): Chito Vidal, Boehringer Ingelheim regional sales manager; Godofredo Ruiz, Boehringer Ingelheim director prescription medicine; Margie Oarde, Boehringer Ingelheim preofessional service representative; Stefan Kilian, Boehringer Ingelheim managing director; Ricky Maximo, Prudentialife sales advisor; Dory Guerrero, Boehringer Ingelheim marketing manager; and Erwin Guilas, Boehringer Ingelheim product manager. Other prizes included time deposits and savings deposits at the Bank of the Philippine Islands, V-Tech Pre-Computers, and numerous bottles of Kiddi Pharmaton.

INVESTMENTS

SM FOUNDATION RECEIVES DONATION

To kick off its program to help uplift the less fortunate, particularly the children, Berkley International Philippines, Inc., together with exclusive distributor Family First Inc., recently collaborated with SM Foundation by donating boxes of toys for orphanages and other institutions for the indigent. The toys, mostly brand new, came from the company's marketing personnel who found the project a channel for showing their compassion to the poor. Berkley is a 35-year-old US-based Fortune 500 company that established business in the country in 1997, making the Philippines the hub of its Asian operations. Berkley was recently given a rating of PRS A plus by the Philippine Rating Services Corp., an affiliate of internationally renowned Standard & Poor's, attesting to the company's 'above-average capacity to meet its financial commitments.' Shown is SM Foundation project officer Gilbert Gaspar accepting donations from officers of Berkley and Family First (from left) corporate lawyer Ethel Napiza, national customer service manager Aurora Diño and corporate communications manager Gina de la Vega-Cruz.

INTERNATIONAL
GRAND EXTRAVAGAN
RAFFLE DRAW
2001

WILSONART RAFFLES OFF FREE TRIPS ABROAD

Wilsonart International, maker of high-quality laminates which is highly recommended by architects and interior designers, recently staged the 'Wilsonart Grand Holiday Extravaganza' raffle draw at the Multi-Rich Home Decors showroom. Three lucky winners were chosen for each category: the consumer buyer, the dealer or retailing store and the construction industry professional. The first prize winners won a 7-day trip to the United States plus $2,000 pocket money, the second prize winners received a ticket for a 7-day trip to Singapore and Malaysia, while the third prize winners brought home tickets for a 4-day trip to Hong Kong. The consolation prize winners received P5,000 each. Shown (from left) is Multi-Rich Home Decors Inc. (exclusive distributor of Wilsonart in the Philippines) vice president Edward Diamonon, Wilsonart Co. Ltd. regional business development manager Thanee Limsettoe, DTI representative Benjamin Veloria and Multi-Rich Home Decors marketing staff Norma Relator.

BITS Clips

Deaf education seminar

THE FOURTH Deaf Education Weekend seminar on Jan. 25 and 26 at CAP Development Center, College Assurance Plan Building, Makati, shall feature the theme "Research as a tool for deaf empowerment." Sessions shall cover school-work transition and employment, human rights and legislation, sign language linguistics, media advocacy, demography, and deaf organizations. Register online at www.deafasia.com, or call 921-8521, care of the Philippine Federation of the Deaf and the Philippine Deaf Resource Center.

CEU alumni homecoming

THE CENTRO Escolar University Alumni Foundation will hold its grand alumni homecoming with the theme "Reaching out and looking back: Escolarians return" on Saturday, Jan. 26, 2 p.m. at the CEU Mendiola Campus. All CEU alumni are invited, especially the 1952 and 1977 golden and silver jubilarians. For further inquiries, call the CEU Alumni Foundation at telefax 735-9405 or 735-6861, local 249, and look for Rizabelle Tayag or Lourdes Hankins. This year's alumni homecoming is chaired by Melanie Peters.

Housing sector golf tourney

TOP OFFICIALS in housing and urban development from both the private and government sectors are holding a friendship golf tournament today, Jan. 24, at the Sta. Elena Golf Club, Sta. Rosa, Laguna to promote housing professionalism and camaraderie. To tee off at 8 a.m., the tournament is sponsored by the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association (SHDA). For details, call the SHDA secretariat at 899-8275 or 890-0323, or e-mail shda@mozcom.com.

Faber-Castell art, music workshops

ON SATURDAY, Jan. 26, Faber-Castell continues with the program launched last year titled "Art Expressions on Musical Impressions" at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila. This program combines art and music appreciation for children and their parents. The theme for the art workshop will focus on "Landscape". Fernando Sena, art teacher and visual artist, facilitates. All Faber-Castell art materials are available at all branches of National Bookstore, stationery sections of all SM branches and all leading bookstores. For more information, call the marketing department at 361-7391-92.

St. Paul College grand reunion

THE PAULINIAN Alumnae Association of Manila invites all graduates of St. Paul College of Manila to celebrate and attend the school's annual general alumnae homecoming on Jan. 27, Sunday. Led by the high school jubilarian classes of 1952, 1962, 1967, 1972 and 1977, the homecoming activities will include a thanksgiving mass, the presentation of a special award to Fr. James B. Reuter, SJ, and a special show, "An OPM Homecoming" at the Fleur-de-lis Auditorium. Show begins at 6 p.m., while registration of alumnae starts at 2 p.m. For inquiries and tickets, call Veronica Villanueva of the Alumnae Office at 523-4259.

Rebap weekend seminar

THE REAL Estate Brokers Association of the Philippines (Rebap)-Caloocan Chapter will conduct a Continuing Education Program (CEP) seminar on Jan. 26 and 27 at the Rotary Center at Roces Avenue corner Mother Ignacia, Quezon City for real estate brokers. The two-day event is intended to provide real estate brokers the required minimum 16-hour credits for the renewal of their license this year, as per DTI AO No. 3, series of 1999. The seminar is also open to real estate developers, property owners and those with interests in the real estate business who wish to apprise themselves of the developments in the real estate business. For details, call Jenny at 373-2281 or Rene at 438-2966. Personal inquiries will also be entertained at the Rebap-national office at Roces Avenue, Quezon City.

CEBU GETS WILD FOR THE AD CONGRESS

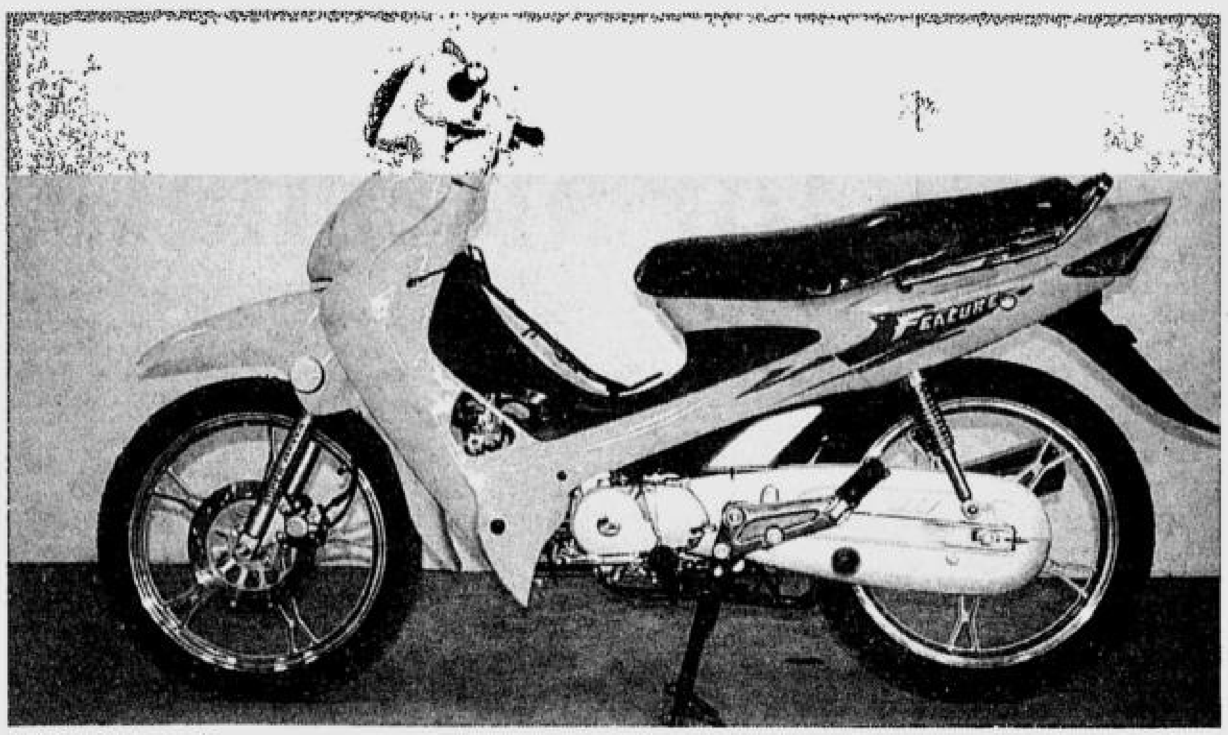
The country's biggest gathering of advertising and marketing professionals kicked off to a wild start as Smart Communications presented the 17th Philippine Advertising Congress Welcome Dinner Party. Hosted by Radio Mindanao Network and Sun Star, the Wild on Cebu Party was a certified hit "getting-to-know-you" affair, with the top guns of industry joining Cebu officials. Aside from the official welcome dinner party, Smart, a major sponsor of the Ad Congress, had also lined up several other activities including bar tours, concert and sports events for official delegates. Shown is Andre Khan (left), CEO of J. Romero and Associates and former KBP president, getting a warm Smart welcome from Ramon Isberto, Smart Communications Inc., public affairs head. Smart, a major sponsor of the ad congress, presented the Wild On Cebu welcome dinner at the Cebu Plaza Hotel garden area.

GIFTS FOR CARDINAL SANTOS MEDICAL CENTER

To welcome new moms of Cardinal Santos Medical Center, baby gift packs are being given by the hospital sponsored by famous infant toy brands like Chicco, Pigeon, Safety 1st, Fisher Price and VTECH toys. The baby gift packs include wipes, breast pad samples, juice feeder, baby book and a lot of informative tools to guide mothers in the crucial stages of child-rearing. Accepting the baby gift packs from Jenny G. Liza, Fisher Price brand manager, is Diana Gochioco, MMD head of Cardinal Santos Medical Center. Through the years, these brands have been top preferences for babies. All committed to optimum child care and development, these brands are exclusively distributed by Richwell Trading Corp. located at 25 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. Chicco, Pigeon, Safety 1st, Fisher Price and VTECH toys are available at all leading department stores nationwide.

New motorcycle brand breaks cover

BY CHARLES E. BUBAN



JEIDA Motorcycle

WITH NEW motorcycle makes and models popping up all over the place, one new brand tries to keep a lid on things. For starters, Jieda Motors Philippines attempts what other new players have failed to provide: quality units and reliable after-sales service.

New players don't stand a chance against the four big names dominating the country's motorcycle market, if they don't start on the right foot.

Says Jose Capulong Jr., vice president of Jieda Motors Philippines: "Dealers are quite reluctant to distribute new brands simply because they can't provide the features and the quality customers are looking for. With Jieda, we have no problem convincing them since this brand is known throughout Asia and some parts of the world."

The Hong Kong-based motorcycle brand is widely distributed in Asia, especially in Iran, Vietnam, Indonesia and Laos. Jieda motorcycle is also exported in Europe (Italy) and in some parts of Africa.

What endeared Jieda motorcycles to these markets is its unique features no other motorcycle brand in its class carry: aluminum alloy mags on both front and rear wheels, chrome-plated engine and rear carrier to resist rust, park lights with interchangeable bulbs, and remote-controlled starter and alarm.

"Our motorcycles have the convenience of having an automatic search and remote keyless engine startup, which you don't find in any other motorcycle in its class," explains Dave Collantes, Jieda Motors production manager, who added that their motorcycles also carry an anti-theft mechanism (remote keyless engine shut-off) much like those in cars.

Prompt after-sales service

A usual disappointment for motorcycle dealers is whenever they can't provide adequate after-sales service or access to spare parts for the motorcycle brands that they carry. To address this concern, Jieda Motors has assigned roaming service technicians in contiguous areas to deal with difficult or major mechanical problems that could be encountered by in-house mechanics at the dealership.

"Customers will more likely blame the dealer if they can't address their concerns. To solve this, Jieda Motors stocked an ample supply of spare parts in our warehouse so that we can deliver right away whatever parts or services our customers may require. Besides, our motorcycle units use standard replacement parts," assures Bernard Abordo, Jieda Motors service manager.

Stringent quality check

"Every Jieda motorcycle delivered has been strictly tested to pass the stringent quality check and control standards of our company. We are registered with the Board of Investments which is proof of our long-term commitment to this country and guaranty that we will provide only the best in our motorcycle units," says Bethoven Francisco, Jieda Motors national sales manager.

Jieda Motors is the local counterpart of Jieda Motor Group Co. based in Hong Kong. The company is recognized among the top 10 motorcycle manufacturers in China.

Jieda motorcycles are available at dealers nationwide including Cyclemar, Kservico Trade, Ropali Trading, Mariel Machineries, GCG Marketing, VIC Imperial Sales, Sunshine Marketing, Marbel E.L. Enterprises, Rhean Marketing, Dumaguete Equipment & Service Center.

Telfast makes driving easier, safer

MOTORISTS taking antiallergy medicines need not worry any longer about getting drowsy while driving especially during long-haul trips with the recent launch in the Philippines of a new antihistamine, Telfast (faxofenadine hydrochloride).

Manufactured by Aventis Pharma Inc., one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies, Telfast is expected to lessen the number of accidents caused by antihistamine belonging to the first- and second-generation, according to Prof. Ian Hindmarch, MD, who was the guest lecturer during the formal launch of the new medicine at the NBC Tent and attended by the country's top medical experts and specialists.

Telfast is therefore the only available third-generation nonsedating antihistamine in the Philippine market today, according to Hindmarch who is also head of the HPRU Medical Research Centre of the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom.

He explained that Telfast doesn't alter a person's level of alertness nor directly or indirectly impair cognitive and psychomotor performance, thus making the medicine just perfect for drivers.

US records show that 3 percent of individuals taking antihistamines and involved in accidents were later found guilty in 72 percent of cases decided in court compared with 86 percent in accident victims using alcohol.

In his lecture before the country's leading men and women in their respective expertise in medicine, Hindmarch cited the sedative effects of antihistamines and explained the need for third-generation drugs like Telfast in the effective treatment of allergic conditions.

With motoring in mind, the impact of sedation caused by antihistamines on the safe performance of daily activities particularly driving is an important aspect when doctors decide which antihistamine should be prescribed to ambulant patients with allergies and dermatological conditions, Hindmarch stressed.

In the case of Telfast, he added that it is expected to offer the therapeutic efficacy of the first- and second-generation drugs with improved pharmacokinetics and metabolism that avoid the side-effects associated with the parent compound and other metabolics.

Nissan Frontier the market's No. 1 choice for 2001

NISSAN Frontier remains the market's No. 1 choice for the second year in a row based on reports submitted by members of the Truck Manufacturer's Association. The year 2001 marked the successful launch of the latest addition to the Nissan family, the Nissan Frontier Pleasure Series. The Frontier fortified its hold on the top spot in the double cab compact pickup category besting all rivals in the 4x2 and the combined 4x2 and 4x4 segments.

Following the well-received introduction of the Pleasure Series, the Frontier proved its formidability as it dominated sales in the combined 4x2 and 4x4 double cab compact pickup segment with an impressive 31.5 percent market share and sales of 2,252 units, even as the economy slowed down in the light of the recent terrorism attacks. Followed by its nearest rival, Ford, as it comes in second posting a close 27 percent market share and total sales of 1,388 units.

More pleasures are to be expected from the Frontier as it ruled over competitors in the 4x2 double cab compact pickup segment posting a commanding total sales of 1,576 units and garnering a 43.4 percent market share. Isuzu posted total sales of 898 units, capturing a 24.7 percent market share.

The Year of the Snake marked several milestones in Universal Motors Corp.'s history as the exclusive assembler and distributor of Nissan light commercial and recreational vehicles in the Philippines. The Pleasure Series came to being with its successful launch last June 2001. Impressing the market with its sleek new looks, halogen headlamps, a distinctive chrome front grille and luxurious bedliner, yet still maintaining its favorite features with safety as top priority. UMC celebrated its 30th year of business partnership with Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. of Japan in September 2001 coming out with the Limited Edition Nissan Patrol and Frontier.

How to wean drivers from tailgating

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

FILIPINO drivers are among the rudest and most undisciplined in the world, thanks mainly to lax or selective law enforcement by traffic policemen. One driving habit that manifests this rudeness is tailgating, or driving extremely close to the car in front so that if the latter makes a sudden stop, a rear-end collision or a chain of rear-enders sometimes takes place.

Why do we tailgate? Because we don't want another car to cut into our path. Notice that even slow drivers suddenly speed up and close in to block a converging vehicle instead of yielding. Rampant tailgating results in crowding, traffic buildup and delay since drivers are unable to maneuver out of tight situations in case of sudden stops, accidents or another vehicle's breakdown.

Comes now reader Mars de Jesus with a Greenzone Traffic Scheme proposal that should wean motorists away from the tailgating habit and in the process instill some badly needed discipline. Mr. De Jesus says he has submitted his Greenzone Traffic Scheme to the city councils of Marikina, Pasig and Baguio.

Mr. De Jesus' idea is simple: If every driver is required to maintain a two-car distance behind the motor vehicle in front, traffic flow would improve since the space between cars will enable each driver to swerve to another lane in anticipation of a bottleneck, a narrowing road or even an accident. With the provision of ample distance for lane convergence, he points out, drivers can yield to the converging vehicle without having to step on the brakes. Thus, traffic will continue to flow smoothly.

Mr. De Jesus proposes that the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) enforce the two-car space between moving vehicles as a traffic regulation in pilot Greenzone areas of implementation such as Edsa, Fort Bonifacio and the Makati Central Business District to introduce motorists to the concept and give them the chance to realize its benefits. To ensure strict compliance with the two-car distance rule, the MMDA will impose a reasonable penalty on motorists who close in while driving within the confines of the pilot area. In a worst case scenario where traffic inside the Greenzone comes to a standstill, drivers must still maintain the two-car distance, Mr. De Jesus says.

It can be done, he insists, citing the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority's success in demanding traffic discipline from drivers. "Any city driver who goes to Subic knows that traffic regulations are implemented without exception," Mr. De Jesus writes. "If motorists are adequately informed and strictly monitored and if penalties will be meted out without exception, then the distance requirement will be observed until it becomes the normal driving discipline among Filipino motorists."

He adds that those who practice defensive driving know that providing distance is a sensible driving technique. A driver does not gain speed or save time by tailgating the vehicle ahead. In tailgating situations, a converging car can cause the driver of the approaching vehicle to step suddenly on the brake, Mr. De Jesus explains. "This causes a chain of sudden braking from all the cars behind that presumably are all tailgating. The amount of time it takes to release the brake and shift to a lower gear already creates a time buildup for everybody and will cause congestion among the oncoming cars."

Aware that discipline and road courtesy are not yet part of our culture, Mr. De Jesus contends that this is precisely why he proposes that the two-car-distance-regulation be imposed at the beginning until motorists learn to adopt this driving habit. "I am confident that upon experiencing the benefit of this driving style," he avers, "they will soon be open to road courtesy in general."

The benefits of the two-car-distance rule are many, according to Mr. De Jesus. Since it will prevent crowding on the road, violators of any traffic regulation can be spotted easily. Ambulances, fire trucks and other emergency vehicles can maneuver quickly through, thereby increasing response efficiency in public service. The transportation of goods and services will be speeded up. Mobility within the city will be facilitated and travel time between destinations such as offices, malls and tourist spots reduced. There will be less air pollution and less traffic accidents, which translates into less losses for insurance companies and lower costs in vehicle repair and maintenance for car owners.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Sorry for driving so close in front of you.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph

Helpful hints in getting the best fuel mileage

PEOPLE from all walks of life are concerned on how to cut down expenses, especially on basic necessities such as food, clothing and shelter. Not to mention the commuter fares, consumer goods and electricity bills. Practically nothing is spared.

Isuzu, the country's leading expert in diesel technology, provides some tips to help you reduce the amount of fuel you use in getting the best fuel mileage.

- **Planning and combining trips** save you time and money. It always helps arrange your itinerary before going out. Planning ahead keeps you from traffic areas and congested times of the day. This ensures a smooth and steady drive. Several short trips taken from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as a longer multipurpose trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm.

Trip planning ensures that traveling is done when the engine is warmed up and efficient. Should you be going to an unfamiliar place, keep close road maps handy. This saves you from getting lost and wasting fuel. With a little planning, you can avoid retracing your route and reducing the distance you travel as well. You'll not only save fuel, but also reduce the wear and tear on your vehicle.

- **Keeping your vehicle in shape** ensures efficiency and engine performance. Check on those often overlooked little details—the air in your tires, clean air filter, fuel filter and wheel alignment—which help improve fuel economy. Not to mention the use of the recommended grade of motor oil, which can improve your gas mileage by 1 to 2 percent.

For diesel-powered vehicles, highly recommended are specified Isuzu Genuine Motor Oils that are available at all Isuzu franchised dealers nationwide.

- **Efficient driving** can definitely cut down fuel expenses. Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes fuel. Sensible driving is also safer for you and others, so you may save more fuel money. Also, one should observe the speed limit since gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60-80 kph. In addition, you should avoid excessive idling since idling gets 0 kilometer per liter.

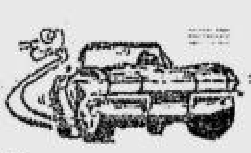
Vehicles with larger engines typically waste more gas when idle than do vehicles with smaller engines. More important, engage overdrive whenever condition permits (which is fourth gear for automatic transmission and fifth gear for manual transmission) since your vehicle's engine speed goes down which in turn saves gas.

- **Choosing a more efficient vehicle** is the most important fuel economy decision you will make. And in this time of economic instability where only the toughest survives, it pays to be well-armed and in ally with your responsible partner, Isuzu Philippines Corp.

Mitsubishi, Toyota toss in cars like peanuts

FULL TANK

Al S. Mendoza



NAME me a sport that stakes cars as major prizes every now and then. Basketball? Volleyball? Boxing?

None of the above.

It's golf.

Tomorrow and on Saturday, the Bill Shaw Golf Classic will be played at Wack Wack. Know what? Five cars will be up for grabs as hole-in-one prizes. Not even the Philippine Open, Asia's oldest professional golf tournament that was founded in 1913, has staked more than one car in its fabled history.

* * *

I raise my glass to Bones Floro, Wack Wack's newest golf director. The guidance he's been receiving every now and then from his mentor, S.P. Malbarosa, has really made wonders—to the delight both of Wack Wack members and Wack Wack president Ben Abalos. Bones has not been having a sound sleep the past days. Reason: he's at the center of things insofar as preparations for the Bill Shaw Classic are concerned.

"But I'm not complaining," said Bones. "I love challenges. This has been a new life for me and I'm taking things one step at a time. I've been learning a lot from my two great mentors—Chairman Abalos and Sir S.P."

Bones has a special place in my heart. His late grandfather, Danny Floro, was a dear friend of mine. Bones' father, Dave, is like a brother. Dave, a single-digit handicapper, has a garage that houses expensive vehicles, including sports cars. Dave is like actor-comedian Vic Sotto—he also collects sports cars.

* * *

Rey Oben, who owns both Toyota dealerships in Balintawak and Otis, has donated two Toyota cars for the Bill Shaw Classic. Another Toyota car was put up by Toyota Motor Philippines (I'm sure the amiable Alfred Ty had a hand in this).

And then Mel Dizon, that ever-reliable top honcho of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, made it "a tournament of cars galore" when he decided to toss in two Mitsubishi cars as prizes for aces, too, for the two-day classic that has now become one of the most talked-about club-level tournaments in the land.

I have yet to see a tournament that stakes five cars as hole-in-one prizes.

* * *

Speaking of car companies supporting golf tournaments, Mitsubishi has been doing it for years now as the Philippine Open's official car.

This year, Mitsubishi is the RP Open's exclusive supporter. Mel Dizon came to the press conference on Tuesday to announce Mitsubishi's "uncompromising support" for the country's premiere golfest. He came to the affair with Thelma Lozano, Mitsubishi's tireless "point person" when it comes to ensuring the car company's hitch-free stint in the annual event.

I'm sure Mel became doubly happy when he learned that the RP Open has returned to the Asian PGA fold through the initiative of Rod Feliciano, president of the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines, in tandem with Abalos.

Said Feliciano: "We've always been a part of the Asian Tour one way or the other. It just becomes official again as we in the NGAP board have allowed the Asian PGA to come to us for the common good of our Filipino pros."

* * *

Again, my congratulations to Mitsubishi for being No. 1 again in sales in the commercial sector. Honda was tops in the passenger category while Toyota was the overall topnotcher.

Isuzu came in strong at year-end with a big sales volume of its Crosswind. Kudos to Art Balmadrid.

* * *

I didn't know Dansel Palma of Honda could both sing and dance that well. She brought the house down when Honda held a party at Eastwood City last week.

***"Bukod sa mabait na bata iyan, marami pang talent,"* said Honda of her latest angel.**

Of course Arnel's two other angels—Min Magbal and Tin Tin Reyes—held their court during that bash. My, Min can still shake and bake I tell you.

And Tin Tin? Oh, well, Arnel's eternally proud of having her in his staff all these years.

* * *

I have been deluged by calls and e-mails about the existence of the Metro Manila Skyway Project and its relation to the Citra Group and the PNCC.

Here's the score: The Metro Manila Skyway Project is a joint-venture project of the Citra Group and the PNCC which formed the joint-venture company called Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp. (CMMTC) under a business contract where a PNCC-wholly owned subsidiary, now known as the PNCC Skyway Corp. (PSC), is designated as the operator of the Skyway System.

The Skyway System is currently at Stage 1 comprising of the 10-km elevated section from Buendia to Bicutan and the 13.5-km at-grade section from Magallanes to Alabang, which the CMMTC totally rehabilitated as part of the System. Situated in the Skyway Project are Stage 2—the elevated section from Bicutan to Alabang and Stage 3—elevated from Buendia to Balintawak. The intention is to connect the South Expressway with the North Expressway via an elevated expressway.

The PNCC operates its controlled areas now covering the Alabang-Calamba section at the south including the Alabang Viaduct and the entire North Luzon Expressway.

* * *

***QUOTE ME.* The airbag, Vandolph's doctor told me, saved the actor's life in that vehicular accident recently in Pangasinan.**

MOTORING

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

STUDY FINDINGS

Filipinos not ready for alternative fuels

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

THE SIGHT, smell and feel of pollution as well as the prospect of its diseases are not enough to compel Filipino motorists to shift to alternative fuels.

The obvious environmental benefits of alternative fuels, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), coconut methyl ester (CME), and alco-diesel are no match to economics and public attitude—the greatest stumbling blocks to the development of alternative fuels in the country.

Alternative fuels are seen as too expensive, difficult to access, and its efficacy and effects on present designed for diesel or gasoline combustion engines are still much in question.

In the data obtained by the INQUIRER, these were the reasons cited by the Society for the Advancement of Technology Management in the Philippines (SATMP), a tripartite alliance of technology advocates in government, industry and the academe. The SATMP involved the environment and energy experts, policymakers, vehicle/fuel manufacturers and consumers in its survey.

ALCO-DIESEL
CME

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Ranking

The SATMP, located at the UP School of Economics in Diliman, Quezon City, ranked the barriers in order of importance. It stressed further that consumers' perceptions were ranked first or second in importance when analyzing the factors that impede the adoption of the technology.

"The importance of the barriers should be judged in terms of the extent it prevents the public from becoming aware of the technology; awareness precedes adoption," says the SATMP in a statement.

The survey indicates that unless alternative fuels are priced competitively, consumers cannot be expected to shift to alternative fuels even with the obvious rewards to the environment.

Among the factors that make alternative fuels costly are the raw materials needed to produce alco-diesel, CNG and CME.

The SATMP says that stability of supply deserves as much concern as the cost. Since alternative fuels cannot be expected to have as extensive a distribution network as conventional fuels enjoy, then motorists do not have the assurance that they can switch to the available fuel when they want to. The SATMP study further adds that though technologies for bi-fuel and dual-fuel vehicles are available, their reliability and cost-effectiveness are less known.

Matching the expansive distribution network of petroleum-based fuels with the distribution network of alternative fuels is a recommendation to overcome what the SATMP termed as "the first mover market advantages."

The doubts of consumers on the effects of alternative fuels on their car engines' performance are another barrier that must be hurdled, says the SATMP. Consumers need assurance from the government, the survey advises.

The SATMP recommends that the government should take the lead in demonstrating the safety of using alternative fuels.

"Bureaucratic rigidities" and "budget constraints" prevent the government from assuming the lead role in demonstrating their use, the SATMP says further. The government is advised to convert its own vehicles so that it could be the first to use alternative fuels. Only then can it encourage the public to do the same. In effect, the bandwagon must start with the government.

The survey even ranked which of the barriers hinder the adoption of what technology most, and which ones were least intrusive.

Alco-diesel

Identified as the easiest to promote among the three, alco-diesel is described as a blend of hydrous alcohol (15 percent) and diesel fuel (85 percent). Hydrous alcohol containing 95 percent ethanol is already being produced locally. Anhydrous alcohol (100-percent ethanol) can also be produced locally but at present, says the SATMP, the local demand is not sufficient to justify local production.

Among the barriers hindering alco-diesel were the uncertainty of its impact on engines and the feasiblity of having engines running on alco-diesel and conventional fuels. The SATMP says that even with successful experiments showing alco-diesel running diesel engines, its application is said to be limited only to a few engine types.

Locally produced alcohol is also costly, the study cites. If alcohol became the mainstream fuel, an expansion of land areas dedicated to sugar, cassava and other plant sources of alcohol is inevitably needed—a requirement the country's limited agricultural area would be hard-pressed to meet.

The "administrative barriers" to alco-diesel include the limited number of stations selling alco-diesel. More investments in facilities to handle alco-diesel are needed, since existing fuel stations may be reluctant to retail alco-diesel as it would compete against conventional fuel.

The SATMP also says the government has to design fiscal/tax schemes to encourage the wider use of alco-diesel, or it should allow jeepneys and public utility vehicles using alco-diesel to charge higher fares.

Coconut methyl ester

The Philippine Coconut Authority recommends the use of CME as an additive to diesel fuel starting at a ratio of 5-percent CME to 95-percent diesel. Combining diesel with CME is said to reduce sulfur emissions from diesel engines, says the study.

The engine performance of the diesel-CME mix would improve greatly if the "esterification process" were to be used on the coconut oil component. Actual road tests of vehicles using pure CME showed fuel consumption was 8 km/liter for city driving and 10 km/liter for country driving.

CME's technical barriers, however, include the absence of any reliable test that would prove that CME could be used for a wide range of engines. The SATMP cites further that there should at least be two storage tanks when using CME.

Compressed natural gas

Natural gas is described in the study as the "cleanest burning fuel," that's why converting diesel engines to natural gas is prevalent in other countries. Vehicles run by natural gas are said to have substantially less emission than vehicles running on conventional fuel.

The Energy Development Center of the Philippine National Oil Co. is the lead agency experimenting on natural gas vehicles. The discovery of natural gas deposits in Palawan, cites the SATMP, as well as the government strongly supporting the development of the market for natural gas are a big boost for natural gas technology.

The study, however, indicates that CNG is deemed as the toughest to promote among other environment-friendly fuels.

The SATMP claims that natural gas has a very low density that requires it to be compressed in a cylinder to a pressure range of 16 to 20 MP. The storage tank is described as "heavy" and "bulky" and "requires specially designed steel or aluminum cylinders and occupies significant space in the vehicle."

The SATMP further adds that aside from the issue of network distribution, the infrastructure problem is more serious for CNG than for alco-diesel and CME since investment would have to be made both by fuel retailers and motorists.

Unless there is stable and abundant local supply of natural gas, the SATMP concludes that few would be willing to risk investing. Fiscal and tax incentives are more needed for CNG than for the other alternative fuels, adds the study.

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Mobilizing the Filipino the cheap way

BY RAYMOND B. TRIBDINO
Contributor

ANALYSIS

THE NUMBERS are in. The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) reports that total industry sales tumbled nearly 9 percent as compared to the same period in 2000. Yet the Land Transportation Office says that about 40,000 new vehicles were registered in 2001.

Don't blame lousy mathematics for the obvious discrepancy. If some 7,000 vehicles less were produced and sold in 2001, what would account for the increase in total vehicle registrations?

If the auction houses claim they sell a combined average of 4,000 units of commercial vehicles and passenger cars a month then there's your answer: the proliferation of secondhand auctioned vehicles.

Secondhand auctioned vehicles have been the bane of automobile manufacturers since import liberalization took effect some three years ago. Under the rules of engagement, the importation of secondhand vehicles became legal—even right-hand-drive vehicles as long as importers are able to convert these vehicles to left-hand drive. What the rules did not state was what kind of conversion was to be done and by who.

Conversion

Though not all auctioned vehicles are right-hand drive, conversion to left-hand drive involves more than simply punching a hole through the bulkhead and transferring a steering box and a pedal assembly to the other side. This is especially true for vehicles called Japanese domestic models (JDM) which are designed for and sold exclusively in Japan or other right-hand-drive markets like the United Kingdom.

Since JDM cars were not made with the left-hand drive market in mind, major technical and mechanical differences make conversion difficult, if not completely unsafe. For instance, some right-hand-drive only cars will have the master-cylinder and brake assembly on the right only with no room on the left side because of the plumbing for the fuel induction system.

Cables and linkages will have to be rerouted to accommodate the repositioning of the steering wheel. Electricals such as harnesses and switches have to be moved around too, which may lead to an electrical fire. In the most extreme cases, important mechanisms, say an idler arm is cut switched around and welded together, or a dashboard is cut and the instrumentation repositioned to the left side. There are some cases where the airbag is deactivated to simplify the conversion.

Target markets

But proponents and owners of secondhand vehicles purchased through auctions claim that these vehicles serve a totally different purpose and target a totally different market.

"Auction cars are like pirated music and software CDs," says an advertising executive who finds the variety of secondhand auction vehicles a healthy sign of a developing automotive industry. "These vehicles should force car manufacturers to rethink pricing strategies and vehicle content, just like bootleg CDs forced music companies to lower prices of the original thing."

Car manufacturers shouldn't blame the auctioneers, according to an official of the Valenzuela-based auction group, because the country's political instability and the economic downturn are mostly responsible for the drop in new car sales.

Moreover, our source insists, auction cars are targeted toward a totally different market,

"We (are) selling these cars and vans to people who are in the market for something different or inexpensive. Many buyers of auction cars are the same ones looking for a secondhand vehicle, but decided that this is a better alternative."

"Filipinos are accustomed to bidding because it is similar to the '*tawaran*' system but in reverse. Since prices can go as low as P200,000 for a three- to five-year-old van, most bidders feel they have gotten a better bargain than simply purchasing from a secondhand dealer or buying direct."

The other market includes people with a fancy for expensive European or Japanese machinery or have the guts to buy a Saab Turbo knowing that parts and servicing will be troublesome.

When asked about the safety issue, our source merely said, "a big number of the vehicles we've already sold are commercial vehicles that (did) not require left-hand-drive conversion."

Campi secretary general Mario de Grano has reiterated his organization's concern about the roadworthiness of used auctioned vehicles claiming these are not safe as they have not undergone the necessary testing.

Used auctioned vehicles may have a role to play in mobilizing the Filipino in a cheap and distorted sort of way. True, bidders of secondhand vehicles may be a market different from that wanting a brand-new car. But the implications of used-car auctions are far-reaching, especially when importers bring in vehicles in the same trim and specifications as vehicles currently available in the country. This will affect new car sales and ultimately the financial health of a local carmaker.

If the government thinks that importation and auction of secondhand vehicles are ways to earn more revenues, it should also come up with a structure to monitor and control the entry of used vehicles with the idea of protecting the consumer, environment and the industry as well.

Consumer safety may come in the form of disallowing the entry of car models that cannot be competently serviced locally because of the lack of an organization for parts and services.

Environmental protection means preventing the entry of vehicles that fail an emissions test. While long-term industry security means protecting currently marketed models.

Toyota is No. 1 automotive firm for 2001

TOYOTA Motor Philippines Corp. emerged as the No. 1 automotive company in the country last year by selling the most number of vehicles for 2001. Despite the market slump and the stiff challenge of the new model introductions by competitors, Toyota was able to retain its market leadership marking its 11th year as the No. 1 automotive company in the country since 1989.

Year-end sales figures released by the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) shows Toyota outselling the other auto companies with total sales of 19,894 units, giving the company a 26 percent share of the total market output. Mitsubishi Motors Philippines is the runner-up for 2001 with the second highest sales output for the year with 16,936 units sold. Isuzu Philippines Corp. dislodged Honda Cars Philippines from its familiar third spot by posting sales figures of 10,421 units for the year.

Despite sliding to the fourth overall market position, Honda Cars held on to the top position in the passenger car (PC) category with its year-end figures of 7,754 units sold. TMP's late surge in the PC market, boosted by the strong sales of the new Corolla Altis, pushed its sales to 5,896 units for the second position while Nissan took the third slot with a sales output of 3,398 units.

In the commercial vehicles (CV) category, Mitsubishi gained the top spot with a total sales output of 14,283 units last year covering an estimated 27 percent share of the market. Toyota finished the year in second place with sales of 13,998 units for an estimated 26 percent market share. Isuzu rounded out the top three with sales of 10,421 units for the year.

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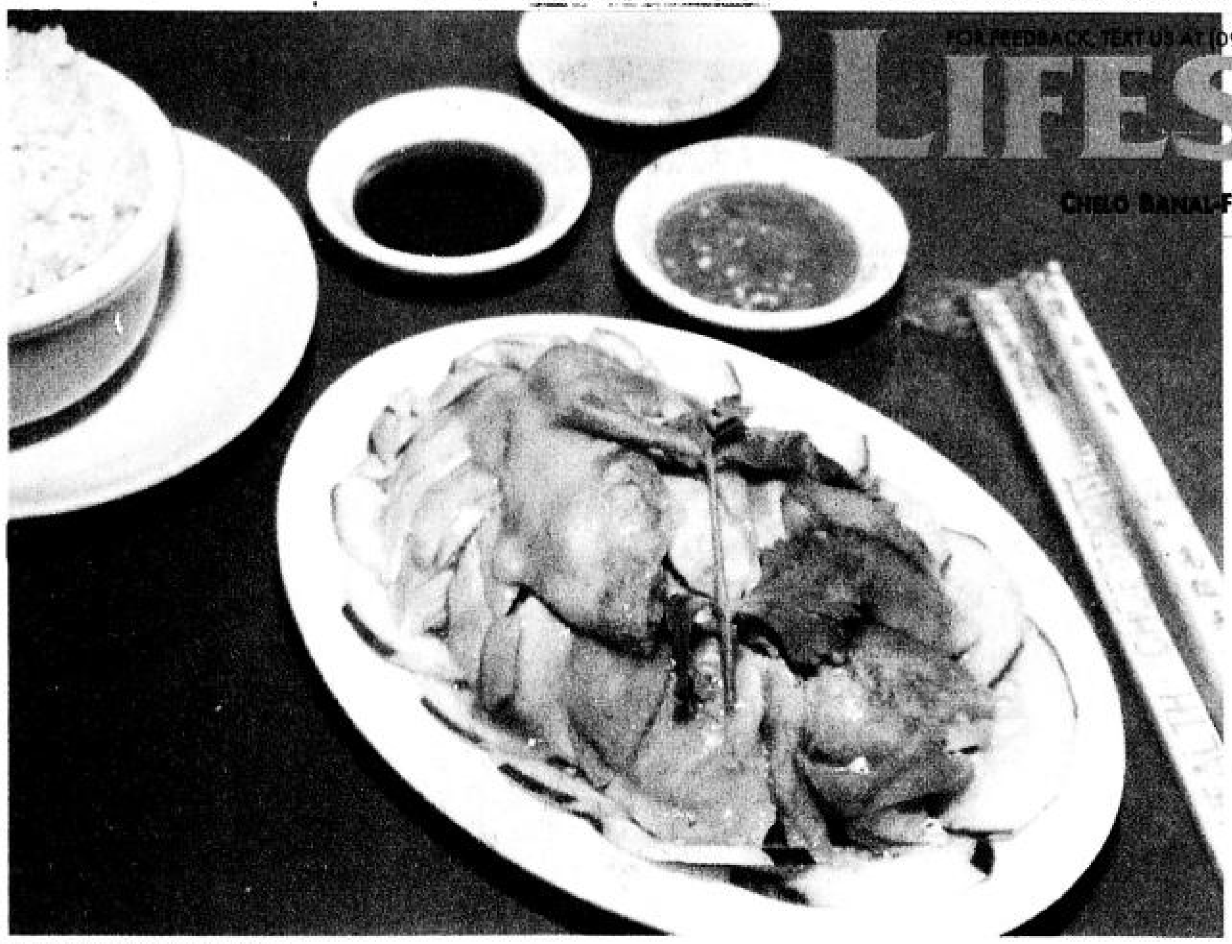
LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

Tasties



HAINANESE chicken rice

Named after the American train stop, Whistlestop came to be even before the movie 'Fried Green Tomatoes' made the café with the same name famous

A stop worth more than a whistle

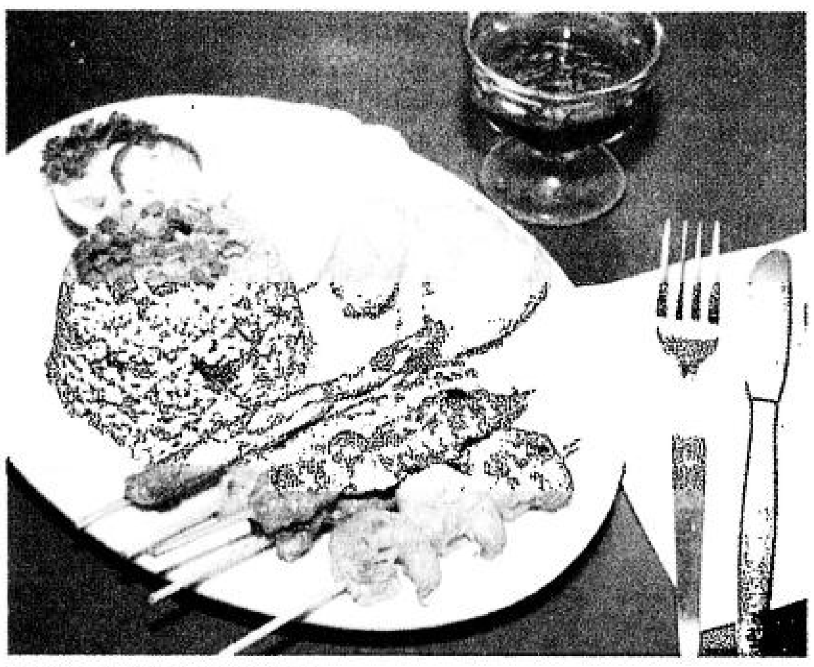
By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Betoy Johnson

METRO Manila's round-the-clock restaurant scene won't be complete without Whistlestop, the biggest and probably the first restaurant and bar chain of its kind in the country. While others have come and gone, Whistlestop has managed to remain and grow during the past 22 years, providing patrons with good food, efficient service and a cozy ambience 24/7.

Whistlestop grew from humble beginnings during the height of martial law. "People were looking for a decent place to while away the curfew," says marketing manager Cynthia Peredo, who was still in shorts, ponytail and sneakers then. "The owners hit upon the idea of opening a 24-hour place on Pasay Road."

Like the American train stop it was named after, Whistlestop served a limited fast-food fare consisting of hamburgers, soft drinks and a few alcoholic beverages. After a few years, however, the owners, through a Singaporean chef, began introducing Singaporean dishes. When the place was razed by fire in 1987, the restaurant moved to its present location on Jupiter Street, where it was among the first establishments to open.

"Others soon followed," says Peredo. "This became *the* place in no time." From then on, Whistlestop became a full-service restaurant serving Asian and American fare. The Libis branch, at the corner leading to Eastwood, opened in 1992, several years before other restaurants and bars began sprouting in the area.



INDONESIAN mixed *saté*

AN INSTITUTION on Jupiter Street in Makati

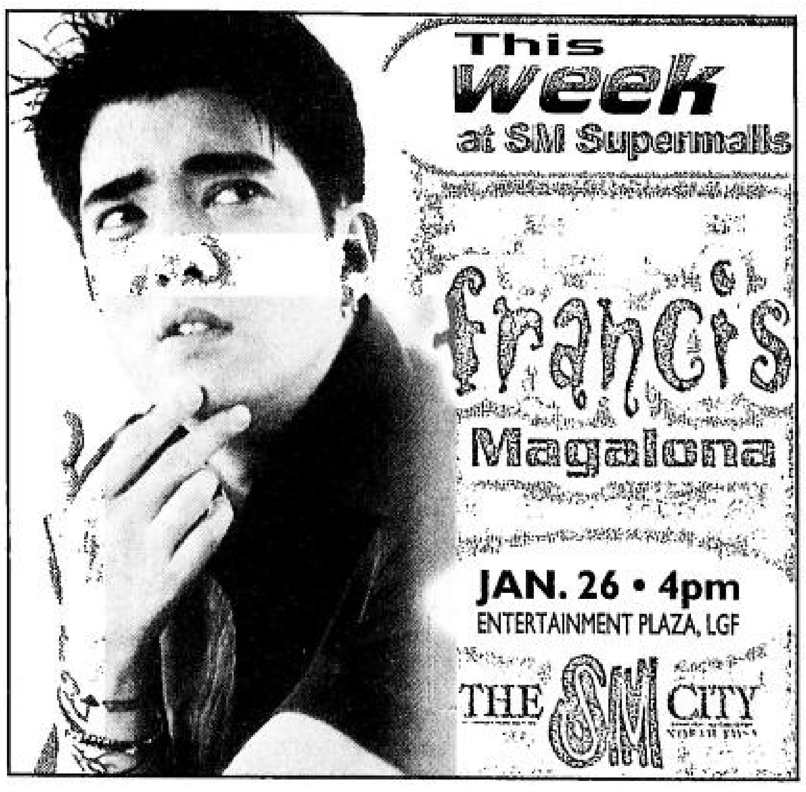
Aside from beefing up its Filipino offerings, the restaurant hired a Thai consultant when it opened its Tomas Morato branch in 1996. The Sucat and Shangri-La branches opened a year later. Each branch has several function rooms for meetings and special occasions.

"Customers love the way we pamper them," says Peredo, "which probably accounts for our success. Unlike other restaurants, we go out of our way, for example, to provide them with breakfast items in the mid-

A STOP/ p.C6

24/7

You are out somewhere and suddenly feel the pangs of hunger. You drive around and everyone has closed for the day. Before you run out of gas, let us cue you in on three dining places that serve food 24 hours a day, seven days a week: Café All Day in Ortigas, Old Swiss Inn in Makati and the Whistlestop restaurants at five different locations. Other all-night stands will be featured in the future. We promise to include kitchens that don't close until 3 a.m. and only do so to clean up . . . and we don't mean your mothers' kitchens



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Heny Sison
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

February 1 (Friday) 9:00-12:30 p.m. P1,500 BASIC TECHNIQUES OF COOKING IV by: Jill Sandique *Asparagus with Sauce Hollandaise, Onion Soup, Blanquette de Veau, Riz Pilau, Sautéed Chicken with Sauce Bourquiqnonne and Strawberries with Orange Sabayon

February 2 (Saturday) 9:00-3:00 p.m. P1,200 CAKE ART SPECIALTIES II by: Jill Sandique *Sesame Spice Cookies, Cappuccino Charlotte, Spiced Apple Cake with Caramel Pecan Sauce, Flourless Chocolate Cake & French Apple Pie with Custard Cake

February 4 (Monday) 9:00-1:00 p.m. P1,200 BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison *Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing

February 5 (Tuesday) 9:00-4:00 p.m. P1,200 BAKING I by: Heny Sison *Super Moist Chocolate Cake with Mocha Filling & Fudge Frosting, Crispy Sylvana, Cream Puff, Lemon Pie, Butterscotch Bars and Sables

BASIC TECHNIQUES OF ITALIAN COOKING SERIES by: Jill Sandique, Chef/Food Consultant & Food Stylist, Blue Ribbon graduate of Peter Kump's New York Cooking School

LESSON I - February 6 (Wednesday) (9:00-12:30 p.m. P1,500 Zucchini Omelet, Milanzane alla Griglia, Pasta e Piselli, Country Roast Chicken, Insalata Mista & Pears Piedmont Style.

LESSON II - February 7 (Thursday) 9:00-12:30 p.m. P1,500 Bruschetta, Crostini alla Toscana, Minestrone alla Genovese, Arrosto di Maile Latte, Siciliana Salad & Frozen Pistachio Cream w/ Marsala Sauce.

LESSON III - February 26 (Tuesday) 9:00-12:00 p.m. P1,500 Zucchini a Scapece, Gnocchi de Patate, Casserole Roasted Lamb, Rosemary Roasted Potatoes, Tomato & Cucumber Salad and Amaretto Cake

LESSON IV - February 27 (Wednesday) 9:00-12:30 p.m. P1,500 Antipasto, Saffron Risotto, Scallop Risotto, Ossobuco alla Milanese, Verze Sofegae, Crumbly Cake

February 6 (Wednesday) 1:30-4:00 p.m. P1,200 COFFEE! COFFEE! COFFEE! by: Aileen Anastacio, owner of C'est Si Bon and Goodies N' Sweets, graduate of culinary at the California Culinary Academy *If you are planning to open a coffee shop this course is for you. Learn the four fundamentals of coffee brewing, home espresso, guide to steaming & foaming. Recipes: Caffé Latte, Caffé Mocha, Caffé Americano, Cappucino, Espresso Macchiato and Espresso con Panna. Make fun toppings and garnishes and master the art of coffee making.

February 7 (Thursday) 1:30-4:00 p.m. P1,200 DESSERT COFFEES by: Aileen Anastacio *Learn how to make a variety of iced coffee drinks; a whole new category of ways to enjoy espresso; Recipes: Almond Coffee Freeze, Icy Rum Coffee Cream, Toffee Coffee, Mudslide Malt, Mocha Rumba, Rocky Road, Mocha Malt and more!

February 8 (Friday) 9:00-4:00 p.m. P1,500 CHOCOLATE ARTISTRY by: Heny Sison *Professional techniques for creating fabulous candies from molded treats to truffles. Learn how to temper, flavor and color chocolates. Learn how to make chocolate lollipops, 3-D hollow molded chocolates, chocholate house and hand molded rose made out of chocolate icing. Packaging ideas will be shown in the class.

February 9 (Saturday) 9:00-3:00 p.m. P1,200 CAKE ART SPECIALTIES III by: Jill Sandique *Concorde Cake, White Chocolate Mousse, Sour Cream Streusel Coffee Cake, Chocoholic's Delight, Fruit Tarts, Cocoa and Lemon Biscuits

February 11 (Monday) 9:00-1:00 p.m. P1,200 CAKES WITH DISTINCTION by: Heny Sison *Sinful Chocolate Cake, Caramel Cake, Custard Cake, Canonigo with Crème Anglaise & Mango Coulis and Layered Brazo de Mercedes

February 11 (Monday) 2:00-5:00 p.m. P1,200 COOKIES FOR COFFEE by: Heny Sison *Chunky Chewy White Choco Macadamia Cookies, Espresso Biscotti, Chocolate Chip Biscotti, Greek Cookies and Almond Wafer

February 12 (Tuesday) 9:00-4:00 p.m. P1,500 CHOCOLATE CAKE TREASURE by: Heny Sison *Decadent Chocolate Cake with Caramel Sauce, Chocolate Tiramisu, Mouth Watering Pan Torte, Cassata and Hazelnut Torte

February 13 (Wednesday) 9:00-4:00 p.m. P1,500 OLD-FASHIONED DESSERTS by: Heny Sison *Honey Crunch Cake, Strawberry Shortcake, Mango Cake, Sanzrival, Melt in th Mouth Mamon and Jelly Roll

February 14 (Thursday) 9:00-2:00 p.m. P1,500 CAJUN COOKING I by: Jill Sandique *Corn & Crab Bisque, Shrimp Pie, Jambalaya, Red Beans & Rice, Blackened Red Fish and Pecan Pralines

February 15 (Friday) 9:00-4:00 p.m. P1,500 BASIC BREAD BAKING WORKSHOP by: Heny Sison *Learn the variety of breads using basic sweet dough. Recipes: Pan de Sal, Cinnamon Roll, Adobo Roll, Cheese Roll & Dinner Roll

February 16 (Saturday) 9:00-4:00 p.m. P2,500 PIZZA CLASS by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli, Master Pizzaioli & Barista, Food Consultant of various Italian restaurant all over Metro Manila, graduated at Culinary Institute, Milan Italy *In this class you will learn the history, concept and design of pizza making. Learn how to make pizza dough, tomato base sauce, white sauce base, preparation, set up pizza counter, know the ingredients and toppings. Recipes: Margherita, Napoli Classica, 4 Formaggi, Pizza Vegetarian, La Gibiana, Piccantina, 4 Stagioni, Calzone & Fruta di Mare. Demonstration with student participation.

February 18-22 (Monday-Friday) 9:00-12:00 noon P3,500 GUM PASTE FLOWER MAKING by: Heny Sison *A unique method of making gum paste flower using a foam pad, a pair of scissors and cutters. The course covers: the Rose, Carnation, Stephanotis, Tulips, Filler Flowers, Catlleya, Christmas Holly, Ponsettia, Daisy, Tiger Lily and Quick Leaves. Learn how to use airbrush and edible petal dust to color the flowers and bunch them into a bouquet. Full participation.

February 18-22 (Monday-Friday) 1:30-4:30 p.m. P5,000 ADVANCED CAKE DECORATION by: Heny Sison *This course covers: baking of fruitcake, covering it with marzipan then with rolled fondant. Learn South African and Australian methods using delicate icing wings, curtainings, ribbon insertion done on rolled fondant cake. Bonus: how to make bows, swags plus chocolate rolled fondant, quilting & cut-outs. Full particpation.

February 23 (Saturday) 1:00-5:00 p.m. P1,500 DISHES IN A TRAY by: Jane C. Paredes, trained at the Culinary Institute of America and Peter Kump's New York Cooking School. Co-owner of Café Cornucopia *Baked Chicken Casserole, Country Style Smoked Pork & Beans, Chunky Green Salad with Lemon Garlic Dressing, Short Ribs in Herb Sauce, Pate Campagne and Apple and Pear Crisp.

February 25 (Monday) 9:00-4:00 p.m. P2,500 FRESH PASTA by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli *There is simply no comparison between homemade handformed pasta and the store bought stuff. Homemade is not only tastier but a lot easier to make than you think. Learn how tomake pasta egg dough, green spinach dough, black pasta dough, different kinds of pastas: lasagna, green lasagna, ravioli, tortellini, cannelloni, fettuccine; green & black, stuffings for ravioli, tortellini and cannelloni. Sauces for lasagna, tortellini, ravioli & cannelloni. Recipes: Lasagna alla bolognese, lasagna al 4 formaggi, lasagna al pesto, cannelloni alla ricotta and spinaci, Ravioli alla boscaiola, al burro e salvia, Tortellini al 4 formaggi, alla panna prosciutto e funghi, green fettuccine alla montanara, black fettuccine al frutti di mare. Demonstration with student participation.

February 26 (Tuesday) 1:30-4:00 p.m. P1,200 HOW MAKE A PERFECT QUICHE by: Jill Sandique *Quiche Lorraine, Quiche au Fromage, Quiche au Roquefort, Quiche aux Fruits de Mer and Quiche aux Oignons

February 27 (Wednesday) 1:30-4:00 p.m. February 28 (Thursday) 9:00-4:00 p.m. P3,000 THE ART OF PLATED DESSERTS: A WORKSHOP (Demo-Participation) by: Jill Sandique *Provide the perfect ending to your guests dining experience with beautifully plated desserts. Learn production and presentation techniques which emphasize flavor, texture and color. Plate compositions include The Skyscraper, Napoleon of Lemon Verbena, Crème Brulee, Autumn Fantasy, Frozen Fruit Parfait and more!

Heny Sison at Julius Maggie Kitchen #31 Plaza Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City

February 9 (Saturday) 1:00-5:00 p.m. P1,200 BROWNIES & BARS *Chewy Moist Brownies, Carrot Cake Bars with Cream Cheese Icing, Lemon Cheesecake Bars, Brownies with Caramel Center and Butterscotch Bars

February 23 (Saturday) 1:00-5:00 p.m. P1,200 BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS *Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing

February 26 (Tuesday) 1:00-5:00 p.m. P1,200 CHEESECAKE GALLERY *Cappuccino Cheesecake, New York Cheesecake, Pastillas de Leche Cheesecake, Caramel Cheesecake, White Chocolate Chunk Macadamia Nut Cheesecake & Piña Colada Cheesecake

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One portion of the café has sunny yellow walls with floral pots drawn on them and the other part is navy blue, with a crescent moon painted on one wall

PANCAKE PASSION. Banana Nut pancakes with Pecan Butter

HOMETOWN FAVORITE. Rib-eye *tapa*

Breakfast food all night and day

BY CATHY BABAO GUBALLA

CAFÉ All Day serves food that harkens back to its chef and part-owner Robby Goco's childhood days. "Much of the food we serve here I remember from days spent at my grandparents' home in Batangas," he says. The international flavors of breakfast food from around the world come from his years of training at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco and working with several restaurants in the Bay area. "What I'm really hoping to do here is bring in special breakfast dishes from all over the world," he says.

THE WARMTH of day

ROMY HOMILLADA

EVENING FALLS. Night portion of Café All Day

At Café All Day breakfast food is served 24 hours a day, seven days a week in interesting interiors—the restaurant is divided into a day portion done in sunny yellow with walls that have floral pots drawn on them, and a night portion that is predominantly navy blue in motif with a crescent moon painted on one wall. The crowd that comes to this 4-month-old café that sits on top of Tequila Joe's at the El Pueblo complex in Ortigas is quite diverse.

Weekday mornings find secretaries queuing for the café's famous Basket-o-Pandesal (five pieces of freshly baked bread with a choice of homemade corned beef, *kesong puti* and olive oil or sautéed *chorizo*) for themselves or to bring to their bosses. "On a regular morning we fill about 40-50 orders," Goco says.

Mid-day finds women in groups or professionals holding brunch meetings. Lunchtime, it fills with people who work in the nearby offices, and *merienda* time is again a hodge-podge of students and professionals. At night, people off from work or young couples catching dinner before heading home fill the restaurant. At odd hours, between 2-4 a.m., it is populated by law and medical students and bar or late-night party habitues.

With cozy interiors and filling food, the café is an alternative to hotel lobbies or the neighborhood java place.

Choices

BREAKFAST TRADITION. Sausage Hot Links

If you're a breakfast foodie who loves to have *tapa* or eggs and bacon at midnight, then this is heaven on earth for you. Consider these choices: traditional favorites such as Sausage Hot Links, a five-spice home country sausage, or an Asian-inspired five-spice sweet pork sausage served with two eggs, hash browns or homestyle fries, with a choice of buttermilk biscuits, English muffin or toast.

Then there is also all-time winner Country-style Ham Steak, which is thick-cut, sweetened and smoked porkloin, pan-fried to a glaze. Goco stresses that their smoking process is done with hickory wood from the United States and that their bacon has no preservatives. "We try to do everything from scratch here and if you check my pantry, you will only find two to three canned items," he says.

Goco has also elevated the humble omelet to a gourmet delight. The Shrimp and Chorizo scramble is an omelet with sautéed shrimp, Bilbao *chorizos* and peppers with cheddar cheese, red onions, homemade salsa and sour cream. The New York Special is an omelet with hot smoked salmon with cream cheese, fresh dill lemon, capers, red onions, tomatoes and spinach.

Pinoy breakfast fanatics will not feel left out with hometown favorites such as Marinated Rib-eye Tapa, which is a choice of sautéed sweet-style or soy-garlic marinated rib-eye, or Smoked Boneless Milkfish, which is cured *bangus* smoked and sautéed with garlic chips. There are more Pinoy favorites and the Hometown Favorites part of the menu makes up 75 percent of the orders.

Porridge, waffle and pancake (short stack, just right stack and tall stack) aficionados can have their fill here. There's a whole selection of coffee, tea, juices, shakes and smoothies to choose from.

Just a warning: the portions served are pretty hefty and can last you from day into night and vise versa.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

There's always room in this inn

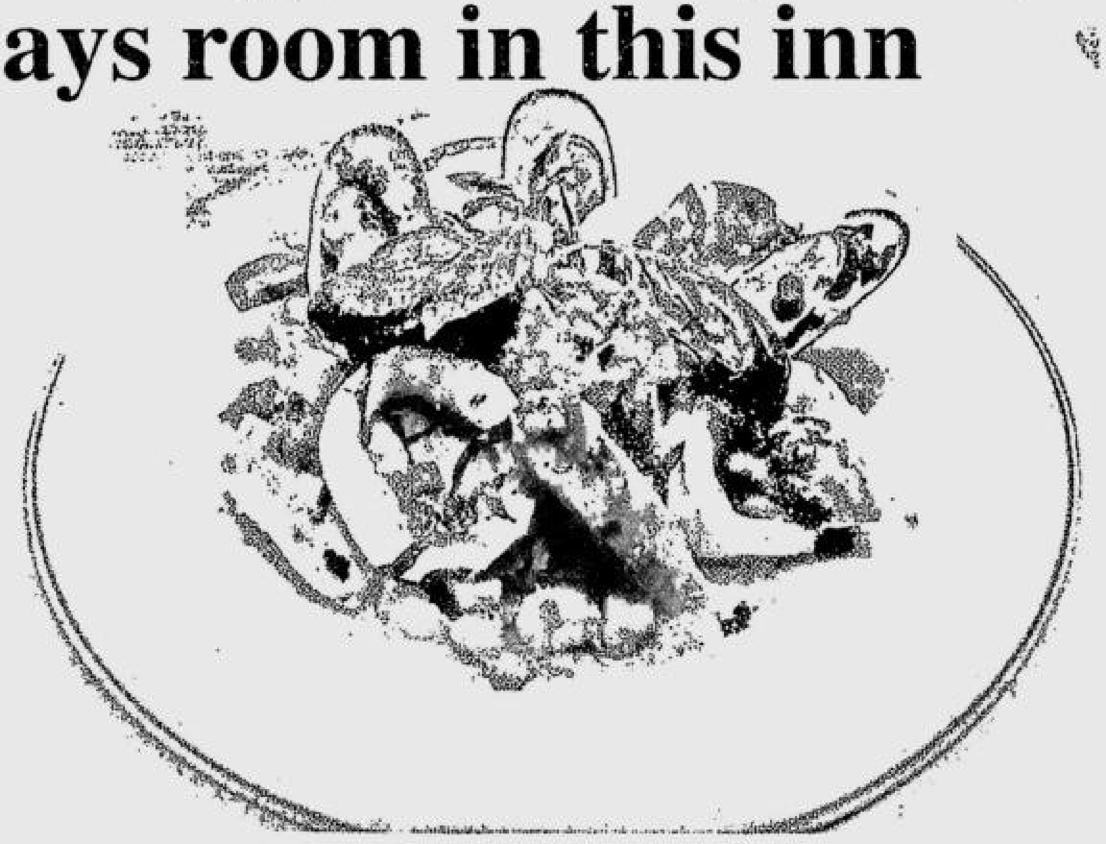
BY VANGIE BAGA-REYES
PHOTOS BY JOHNNY VILLENA

OLD Swiss Inn is one of Makati's best-kept secrets. The restaurant at Olympia Building on Makati Avenue (beside Peninsula Manila) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is extremely popular for its fondue, sausages, cheeses and other Swiss delicacies. But delectable food and efficient services beside, Old Swiss Inn is known for the "privacy" it offers its clientele. "We don't hover around our guests. They feel comfortable and safe here. That's why they keep coming back," says China Bonzon, outlet manager.

A quick look at their guest book shows the restaurant's frequent diners. To name a few: Perfecto Yasay, Sen. Jun Magsaysay, Sen. Serge Osmeña, Sen. Manny Villar, the Zobels, Miriam Quiambao with Hans Montenegro, Vicky Morales-Reyno (who enjoys the chocolate fondue), former First Lady Imelda Marcos (who loves the corned beef), Pops Fernandez, Joy Ortega and Kris Aquino.

Also regular clientele are expats who live in nearby Forbes, Dasmariñas, San Lorenzo Village and Urdaneta. Then there are the insomniacs and partygoers who want to cap their day—night, rather—with good food.

The original and older Swiss Inn opened on Roxas Boulevard in 1946, and later moved to Paco, Manila, at the Garden Plaza Hotel and Suites. It branched out in 1992 to Makati. Soon after, an offshoot of the restaurant opened in Greenbelt called Bon Marché. But the only 24-hour service restaurant is the one in Makati.


HEARTY MEAL. Risotto alla Marinara, a braised seafood and shellfish in wine-butter sauce served with risotto

HOUSE SPECIALTY. Pork Knuckle, a pickled prime-cut pork knuckle, either baked or boiled, served with sauerkraut and boiled potatoes

Elegant and rich

Old Swiss Inn features an elegant interior—heavy, polished beams of solid wood, cozy chairs and tables with checkered linen. The area surrounding the bar is also done in solid wood, with vintage Swiss wines and slabs of Swiss cheeses decorating the walls. Topping the entire look, of course, are little Swiss flags hanging proudly above the ceilings. The subdued lighting and soft pipe-in music provide for a romantic and intimate atmosphere.

The menu is so diverse and rich it treats the hungry to a different kind of "food trip." Escargot Bourguignonne made of delicious vineyard snails, stuffed with garlic butter, tops the appetizers' list. For hearty soups, favorites are Goulash Soup spiced with paprika with lashings of beef and vegetables, and Barley Soup, a creamy barley with brunoise vegetables and smoked bacon.

Most of the main dishes almost look too good to eat. Smart choices include Pork Knuckle (or Gnagi), which is a pickled prime-cut pork knuckle, either baked or boiled, and served with sauerkraut and boiled potatoes; Corned Beef, a juicy corned beef brisket, served with sautéed cabbage and boiled potatoes; Zurich Geschnetzeltes, a shredded pork tenderloin in rich mushroom cream sauce and served with roesti potatoes; Risotto alla Marinara, a braised seafood and shellfish in wine-butter sauce and served with risotto; and Raclette Cheese, a traditional Swiss dish with two servings of melted raclette cheese served with boiled new potatoes and pearl onions.

ELEGANT AND COZY. Swiss flags hang proudly above the ceiling.

The Old Swiss Inn on Makati Avenue never closes its doors to diners who go there for sinful pleasures such as chocolate fondues, imported cheeses and hearty dishes

Sinful pleasures

If you're open to truly sinful pleasure, nothing tops the Old Swiss Inn fondue. The famous Toblerone chocolate fondue is worth trying and coming back to. Also recommended are Waadtlander Fondue, or more commonly known as the classic Swiss cheese fondue. It has bread cubes dipped in melted gruyere and emmenthal cheese, laced with kirsch for that extra kick.

For meat-lovers, Fondue Bourguignonne offers select beef tenderloin cubes dipped in hot oil, with a carousel of sauces and served with French fries. For seafood-enthusiasts, Neptune Fondue features salmon, shrimps, fish fillet, squid and scallops, dipped in a saffron flavored fish stock, with a carousel of sauces and served with garlic rice.

According to Bonzon, guests who usually come in during the wee hours order fondues, wines or coffee. Those who are big-eaters simply wait for the breakfast buffet, which is available from 5 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Apart from the regular breakfast treats of pancakes, waffles and hash brown potatoes, it also serves Filipino favorites like boneless *bangus*, *arroz caldo*, *longganiza hammonado* and beef *tapa*.

"The advantage of a 24-hour restaurant is people can come anytime and order their favorite food . We never close because we don't want to fail our customers," says Bonzon.

There you have it—anytime is as good a time to share Makati's best kept secret.

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

Fine-dining restaurant ventures into franchising

have bites of fun...
blue
bacon
café

RATED by noted gourmets, food critics and foodies as one of the finest restaurants in the country, Blue Bacon & Green Eggs has been known for its fine cuisine for the past six years. It continuously strives to give patrons a wider selection of dishes to choose from.

According to Mike Prado, president of Blue Bacon & Green Eggs, their guests always have something new to try whenever they visit the restaurant. He adds, "It's always a challenge to constantly create new dishes for our clientele. We really pamper them to the extent of giving in to their requests to be served certain dishes that are not included in the menu. Our chef can whip up anything they like for as long as we have the ingredients on hand."

On a monthly basis, they also come up with special set menus that continue to entice even the most discriminating taste buds. This month, their special set menu includes rich and creamy Pumpkin with Shiitake Soup, Charcoal-grilled Marinated Prawns with Saffron Rice and Fresh Garden Salad with Balsamic and Honey Dressing for the main course and Petite Orange and White Chocolate Soufflé with Vanilla Sauce for dessert.

Due to the continued success of the restaurant, they have received a lot of inquiries about expanding the business and getting into franchising. "A lot of people have expressed interest in getting a franchise of the restaurant as early as the first year of our operation, but I had no intention of rushing into it because if and when I do get into the franchising business, I want each restaurant to be unique and one-of-a-kind," says Prado.

After years of tedious preparation and conceptualization, he has decided to name it Blue Bacon Café and five restaurants are initially available for franchising in the Metro Manila area on a highly selective basis. Each restaurant will have its own theme such as "Venice," "Fairy Fantasy," "Under the Sea," "Circus" and "Harlequin."

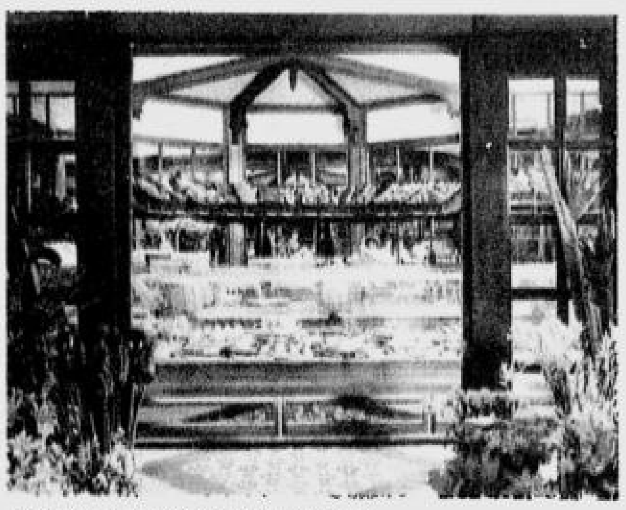
But despite the whimsical themes, Blue Bacon Café is a restaurant geared not just for the young but for the whole family. "I want people of all ages to have a lot of fun while enjoying their meals. It will be like stepping into a different world when they enter the restaurant. The exterior and interior decor will be creative, colorful and tastefully designed as a happy and comfortable place to be in while dining," explains Prado.

Aside from these, each Blue Bacon Café will have its own "collectibles shop" that will carry an exclusive line of merchandise, ranging from home decor and novelty items that depict the theme of each Blue Bacon Café.

"Change and innovation are necessary and inevitable if anyone wants to stay in the food business. This challenge is what drives me to keep on coming up with new ideas. I believe that Blue Bacon Café will once more fuel a different trend in the restaurant business," he concludes.

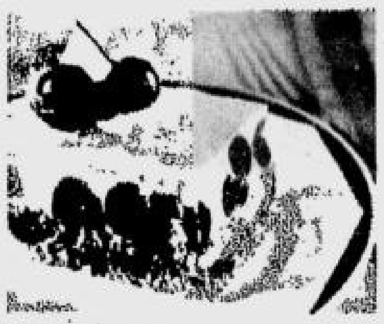
Interested franchisees may call Mhabie, Del or Rose at 721-2717, 721-7680 and 721-2714 or e-mail blubacon@info. com.ph.

Gourmet corner relaunched



MAKATI Shangri-La's Gourmet Corner has now expanded its traditional offerings of patisserie and delicatessen items to include an array of flowers from the Philippines and abroad.

The Gourmet Corner, now ideally situated at the hotel's concessionaire's area on the ground floor, is a place where visitors can drop by anytime of the day to relax, have a cup of coffee and choose from a selection of fresh-baked breads, fanciful cakes, Danish pastries, muffins, chocolates and other deli items. Adding a touch of color are lavish arrangements of hydrangeas, roses, lilliums bromeliads, mums, anthuriums and other flowers that guests can buy for any occasion.



Call 840-0884.

Young chefs get ready for a showdown

YOUNG and upcoming chefs from all over Manila have been preparing for the Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) Black Box Culinary Challenge to be held on Jan. 27-28 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel.

Eight teams will participate in the event, culminating in a gala dinner at the Mandarin Oriental. The winning team will represent the Philippines in the regional finals in Kyoto, Japan in March.

Organized by MLA, the culinary challenge encourages young chefs to utilize their creative and culinary expertise, and has attracted teams from seven major hotels and culinary schools.

Since its inception in 1996, the MLA Black Box Culinary Challenge has been popular among young chefs throughout Asia, from Guangzhou to Bali. It is now a major food service event in the Asian region.

Recently, the event has been held in Korea, Japan and Mauritius taking it out of the South Asia region and moving into the wider international arena.

The event's popularity is largely due to the mysterious black box. Teams of young chefs, led by a team manager, have one hour to design a three-course menu using previously unseen ingredients from a "Black Box." Twenty-four hours later the teams return to prepare their meals for the judges and guests at the gala dinner.

The "Black Box" contains predominantly Australian products and includes a mix of beef or sheep meat, fruits and vegetables, cheeses as well as products from the internationally renowned food service supplier Hela Foods.

At the gala dinner, meals prepared by the teams are served with Australian premium Penfolds wine.

Tim Kelf, regional manager, South Asia for MLA, said "The MLA Black Box is designed to give chefs under 30 years of age the opportunity to compete at a national and regional level, and to educate them about the quality and adaptability of Australian red meat, and other Australian fine foods."

The MLA Black Box Culinary Challenge in Manila will be held in association with Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Philippines (HRAP) and Les Toques Blanches, who represents the World Association of Cooks Society (WACS) in the Philippines.

MLA carries out marketing, research and development for the Australian red meat industry. Through education and promotion, MLA aims to increase the awareness of Australian beef and lamb among consumers, retailers and food service operators in Australia and international markets. MLA maintains a strong commitment to the food service sector and works closely with the industry worldwide.

GET READY FOR A WHOLE NEW LOOK!

uila fratmen off the hook in Villa slay
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

From January 25 onwards, you'll be seeing a new Inquirer. With sleek fonts and slender columns in a new trim size. Handier, easy to read, hard-hitting as ever —and for advertisers, lots of ad space to catch the eye of over 2 million readers! So from now on, make sure yours are made over for our new ad specs.

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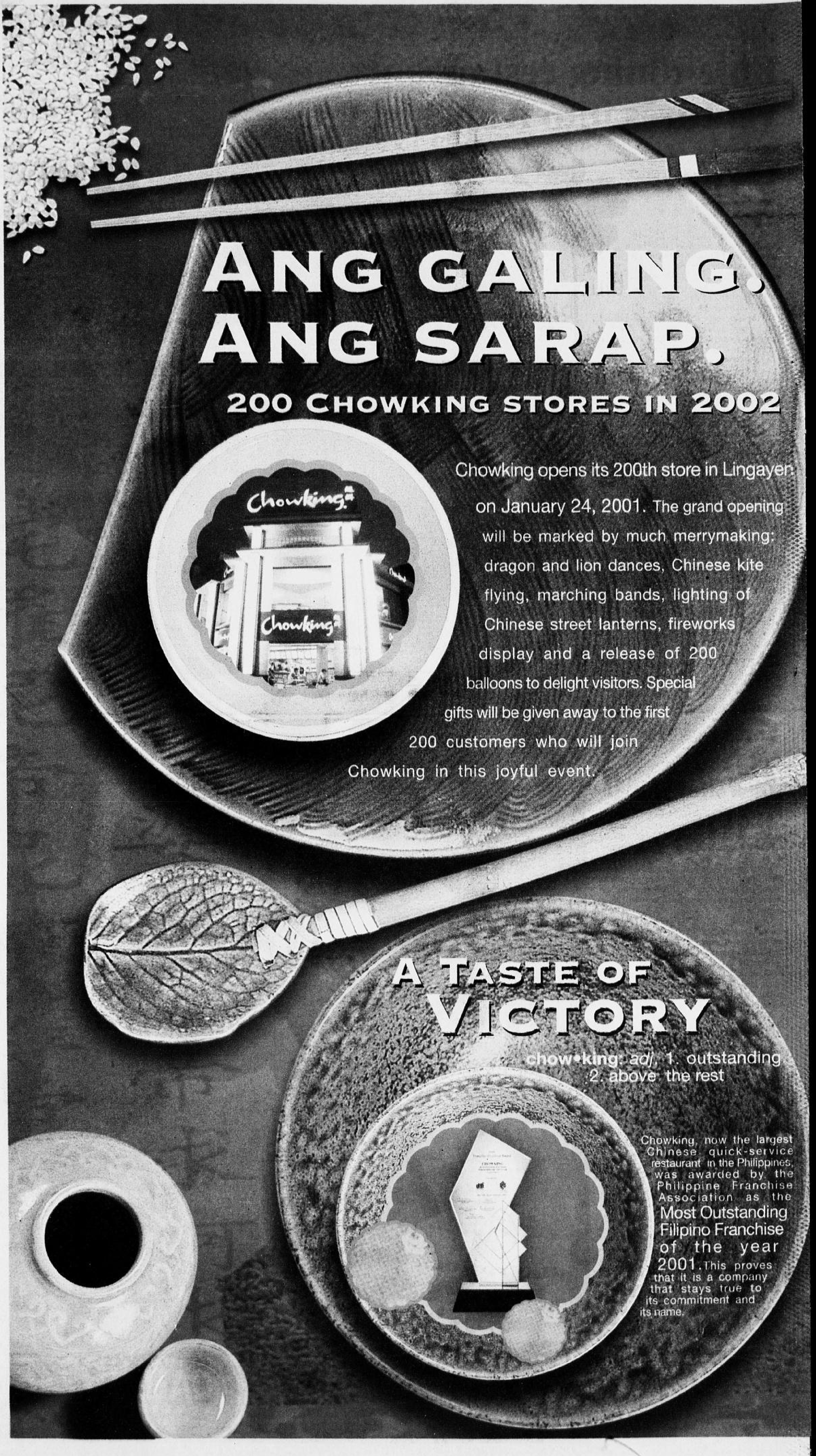


ANG GALING. ANG SARAP.

200 CHOWKING STORES IN 2002

Chowking opens its 200th store in Lingayen on January 24, 2001. The grand opening will be marked by much merrymaking: dragon and lion dances, Chinese kite flying, marching bands, lighting of Chinese street lanterns, fireworks display and a release of 200 balloons to delight visitors. Special gifts will be given away to the first 200 customers who will join Chowking in this joyful event.

A TASTE OF VICTORY

chow•king: *adj.* 1. outstanding
2. above the rest

Chowking, now the largest Chinese quick-service restaurant in the Philippines, was awarded by the Philippine Franchise Association as the Most Outstanding Filipino Franchise of the year 2001. This proves that it is a company that stays true to its commitment and its name.

OUR RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Chowking makes sure their loyal customers enjoy a wide array of meticulously prepared meals. Food is served hot and fast, in value-for-money portions. The Chowking staff is driven by a passion to delight and excite, always with efficient service and a ready smile.

MORSELS OF WISDOM:

"I believe success is dependent on how people are motivated, so I motivate them to achieve goals and encourage them to have fun doing it."

RAFFY DELA ROSA, CEO

A DIP INTO THE PAST:

The first Chowking store was opened on December, 1985 at Sta. Cruz, Manila. Today, it still serves customers with delicious meals at reasonable prices.

200 STORES

AND STILL GROWING

Chowking®

The glory that was Greece lives in Mati

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

IT'S not in Davao, as everyone knows by now. Mati is a restaurant serving Greek food, and is the current buzz at the Power Plant Mall (G/F facing E. Lopez Avenue; tel. 897-6284). The evening we first tried it, whole families, swingles, cozy couples old and young filled it, and the operator could only hold our reservation till 7:30. At lunchtime we found it filled with ladies-who-lunch, their laughter and cheerful chatter reverberating in the uncarpeted and undraped space of near-Hellenic simplicity.

The name derives from a blue glass amulet in the shape of an eye, meant "to ward off the effects of the evil eye." It was chosen to focus the theme of Greek hospitality, home style, as interpreted by the Psinakis family. Steve and Presy (Lopez) Psinakis' children own it, and only daughter Geni runs it. She is an English major with people skills, and works alongside her first cousin Yorgos Psinakis, who grew up within the culture and with the food. He it was who chose the decorative objects and wall frescoes, and he answers questions about Greek history, culture and food, explaining that this is one of the healthiest diets in the world.

Chef Jeremiah, 60, trained in the CIA in Napa Valley, and then with the Psinakis family cook. Thus the menu is predominantly home food. In it one encounters the few dishes familiar to non-Greeks—*moussaka*, *taromosalata*, *baklava*—and many more.

So many new things

We began with Steve Psinakis sitting at our table and ordering for us. We accepted everything in complete faith and a sense of adventure, and it was good. Start, he instructed, with a selection of *mezedes* or starters: pita bread and a *fava* bean-olive oil dip: *kalamarakia* or crisp-fried baby squid tentacles to dip into *tzatziki* (yogurt, cucumber and garlic) or on which to squeeze lemon juice. *Briam* has oven-roasted potatoes and zucchini in olive oil, garlic, tomato and fresh herbs; *kolokythakia tiganita* are fried zucchini coins in a beer-*ouzo* batter, which were the table's favorite. Many of the above are vegetarian or vegan, and should keep the non-carnivorous happy. These and the rest of the repertoire could make me happy as well, as I taste and graze forever.

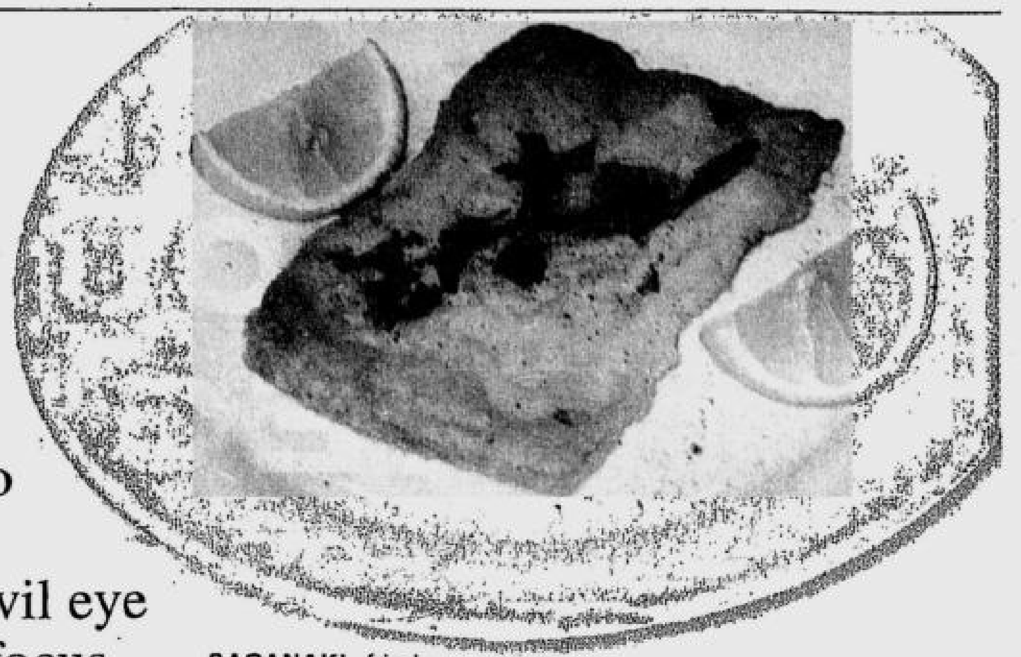
Steve unhesitatingly prescribed for us *paldakia*, grilled lamb chops with lemons to squeeze on them. We ate with our fingers, then reordered twice more so that Ambeth Ocampo could have his own portion. It was excellent.

As a concession to the popular taste, we also had *moussaka*: eggplant layers, ground beef and béchamel sauce, cheese-sprinkled and baked golden brown. We had tasted so many new things that it didn't seem exciting enough for our awakening palates, although it was better than anything we'd had in non-Greek restaurants.

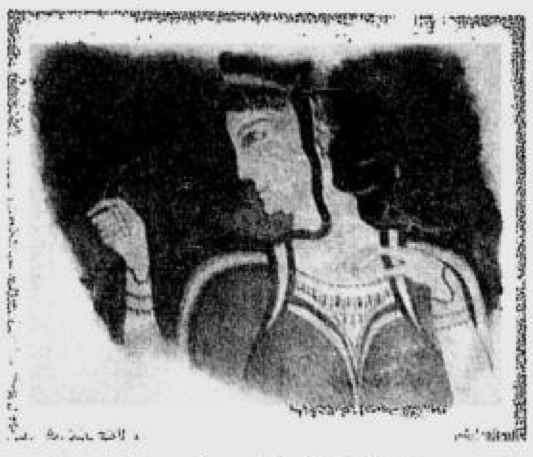
CHEF Jeremiah Go

YORGOS Psinakis, manager

The name comes from a blue glass amulet meant to ward off the effects of the evil eye and chosen to focus the theme of Greek hospitality, home style, as interpreted by the Psinakis family



SAGANAKI, fried *Kefalograviera* cheese



MATI's wall fresco

With this we drank Greek wine from small vineyards that Yorgo had discovered and sometimes bought out. (French wines are also available.) We had an array of desserts: *baklava* of course (*filo* pastry, roasted almonds and walnuts), baked fresh; *loukomodes* or honey puffs; a comforting *rizogalo*, or cinnamon, milk and rice pudding that we all recognized from childhood, being like the Spanish *arroz con leche*.

That explosion of sweetness we gentled with *ouzo*, the delightful, smoky-tasting anise-based liqueur. Although our haze of contentment was visible, Yorgo would not rest, and brought us yet another dessert: slender glasses of Muscat wine—sweet and seemingly non-alcoholic, but packing a gentle punch.

FAVA bean dip and pita bread

Lunch for a better look

When we returned to Mati days later for an early lunch, we could survey better the layout and furniture. Mati seats 110 indoors, but sidewalk tables under umbrellas are comfortable even at noon, and on weekends the street outside is closed to vehicles, and 200 or so diners can be accommodated.

This time we had *spanakopita*, spinach and *feta* in *filo*: thin, hot and delicate. Presy, who was lunching with cousins, introduced us to a wonderful *saganaki*, fried *Kefalograviera* cheese on which one squeezed lemons. Eggie Apostol and I sang the praises of the Mati Salata: arugula and romaine dressed with balsamic vinegar and extra-virgin olive oil, and topped with walnuts, Parmesan shavings and sun-dried tomatoes. Winnie Cantos, pasta lover, would not yield to my suggestion that she try the Clam Pasta, spaghetti with sautéed clams in garlic, white wine, lemon juice and fresh parsley. She was blissful with the Pasta Garides Saganaki: spaghetti with prawns, *feta* crumbles, tomato sauce and a spark of chili.

Yorgo had still another wine for us to try: a white wine from black grapes, perfect, he said, with appetizers.

The service is thoughtful and fast, especially for the *mezedes*, which seemingly fly in with fleet-footed Hermes, the herald of Greek mythology. Yorgo and Geni are informative and attentive, while Presy and Steve are there to greet and help with the many patrons they know.

By this time Mati is a little more than a month old, and promises that the soft opening menu will be enriched to "encompass the multitude of flavors that is Greece," as well as to reflect patrons' reactions and suggestions. The managers listen and learn, speak and teach, making us feel that Mati will last, even in these times of fleeting change: Mati-*tira*, whispering about "the glory that was Greece" to a world ready to listen.

The doctor is in . . . and he's cooking 'pancit langlang'

By Eufemia C. Estrada
Contributor

YOU can ignore the warning on ophthalmologist Dr. Romeo Espiritu's apron, "Don't ask me for the secret family recipe." (EC Aprons, 721-1704)

Here he shares with readers his recipe for the Imus, Cavite specialty *pancit langlang*, a family favorite. Espiritu is well known for his *Langlang* among his family and doctor-friends. His son Ces, also an ophthalmologist, and grandson Ace, senior high school student at the Ateneo de Manila University, have learned how to prepare the dish, thus assuring that this Imus specialty will live on.

Espiritu learned how to cook this dish as a 17-year-old college freshman at the University of the Philippines, when he worked as a kitchen helper and waiter at the family-owned Imus Café on Evangelista Street in Quiapo. The small restaurant occupied the vacant space in front of the older Espiritu's construction firm.

Perfected

Espiritu's mentor was a cook who used to have a restaurant in Imus and among his specialties was the Imus *pancit langlang*. Espiritu's stint at the restaurant ended when UP was transferred to Diliman. But by then he had perfected his Langlang.

Today it is a must-serve at family reunions, on special occasions such as when his brothers drop by his Greenhills condominium for a visit, or when doctor-friends have get-togethers. Sometimes, even when Espiritu is not joining the group, his doctor-friends request for a stockpot of his *langlang*.

Dr. Espiritu, who has retired from active practice and had a kidney transplant almost two years ago, remains a professor emeritus at the UP College of Medicine. He has to give lectures at least once a month and attend two weekly conferences. He is also president of the Vitreo-Retina Society of the Philippines.

Though Espiritu does not accept orders, neighbors like the author can cajole him into sharing a portion when he cooks it in a 3½-gallon stockpot used exclusively for this purpose. There's serving enough for 24-30 persons.

Espiritu does the preparation in several steps because the preparation is labor intensive.

Before the Christmas holidays, for example, Bella, the doctor's wife, was able to buy fresh duck's eggs. This was promptly made into the shrimp omelet, cut up into large cubes and frozen.

The day before the *pancit* is to be eaten, the sirloin, *bulalo* and *liempo* (you can use pig's head) are simmered till tender; the soup is rich and tasty.

DON'T ASK ME FOR THE SECRET FAMILY RECIPE

DR. Romeo Espiritu cooking the Imus specialty *langlang.*

The family recipe for this Imus specialty will have a long life because ophthalmologist Romeo Espiritu has had the vision to teach his son and grandson how to prepare it

The sirloin and *liempo* are likewise cut into cubes. The *bulalo* is stripped of all the *litid*, packed in thick plastic bags and frozen. The broth is refrigerated, fat removed, before the Langlang is finally put together.

The recipe follows for the readers' enjoyment.

Pancit Langlang

For the omelet:

12 duck eggs
2 c cornstarch
1 kg large white shrimp, raw, peeled, deveined, cut in half horizontally
Salt and pepper to taste

Beat the duck eggs and mix in the cornstarch to the consistency of pancake batter. Add in the halved shrimp. Season with salt and pepper. Cook omelets. This amount makes five 8-inch omelets about three fourths of an inch thick. Cool omelets and chop into half-inch cubes.

For the stock:

2 kg *bulalo*
1 kg sirloin, whole
1 kg *liempo* or pork loin or pig's head
2 onions, halved

Put meats in a stockpot with water to cover; bring to a boil removing scum as it forms. Add onions. Reduce fire and simmer for about one hour. Season with salt and peppercorns. Cool.

Chop sirloin and *liempo* into ¾-inch pieces. Scrape *bulalo* bones of *litid*. Remove marrow. Refrigerate or freeze.

On the second day, put the *langlang* together.

12 duck eggs, hard-boiled, sliced lengthwise
2 heads garlic, chopped fine, fried to golden yellow
Green onions, chopped
1 c *patis*, or to taste
½ kg golden *bihon* (do not soak), broken up

Remove fat that has set on top of broth. Bring the broth to a boil. Drop the meats, omelet, hard-boiled eggs. When the mixture comes to a boil again, add the fried garlic and green onions and season with salt and pepper. Lastly, add the *bihon*.

Remove from the fire when it boils.

A stop worth more than a whistle

(From page C1)

dle of the afternoon."

Big menu

On top of its long hours, one of Whistlestop's strengths is its varied fare. As a 24-hour place, however, diners expect it to provide them with any of the 80 or so hot dishes on the menu regardless of the time of day. "The menu became so diverse because certain customers have stopped us from parting with their favorites," Peredo explains. "That's why we have such a big inventory of ingredients in the kitchen."

Nowhere else can you see a list that includes Singaporean staples such as Hainanese chicken rice and pork *satay*, Filipino favorites such as *kare-kareng baka* and crispy *pata* and Thai treats such as *bagoong* rice and chicken *pandan* in one menu. The place also has its share of soups, sandwiches and salads prepared either the American or Oriental way. Of course, the bar serves a full line of drinks and hors d'oeuvres. Happy hour is from 3-8 p.m.

To support its operations on Jupiter, Whistlestop employs close to 80 people working in three shifts. The bigger but less busy branch in Libis has almost the same number of personnel. "Don't even talk about the monthly rental and utilities bills," says Peredo with a chuckle. "Labor cost is enough to give us sleepless nights."

The customer profile varies and depends on the branch and time of day. During the coup attempts that rocked the Aquino administration in the late '80s, for example, soldiers had trooped to the Jupiter branch, one of only few restaurants that remained open when rebels briefly took over the financial district. During last Monday's Luzon-wide blackout, families tried to escape the heat at the nearest Whistlestop branch.

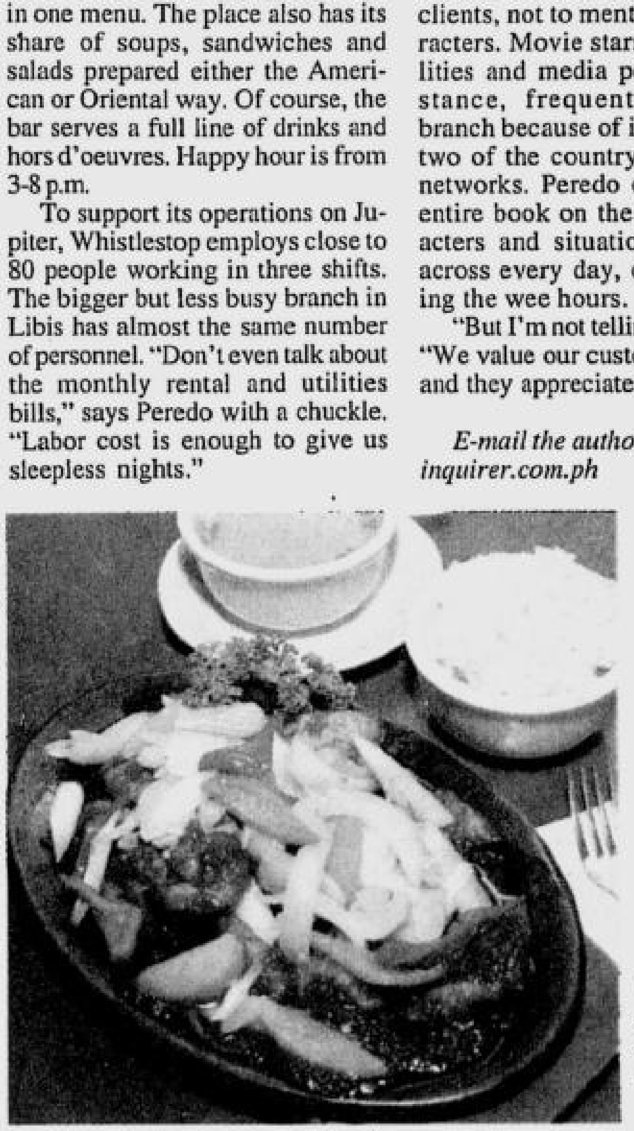
Thriving

"We seem to thrive in times of calamities," says Peredo. "Loyal customers don't want to give us a break, but we don't mind." Aside from the bimonthly general cleaning, which begins from 3-7 a.m., the only other time Whistlestop branches were closed was last New Year's Day.

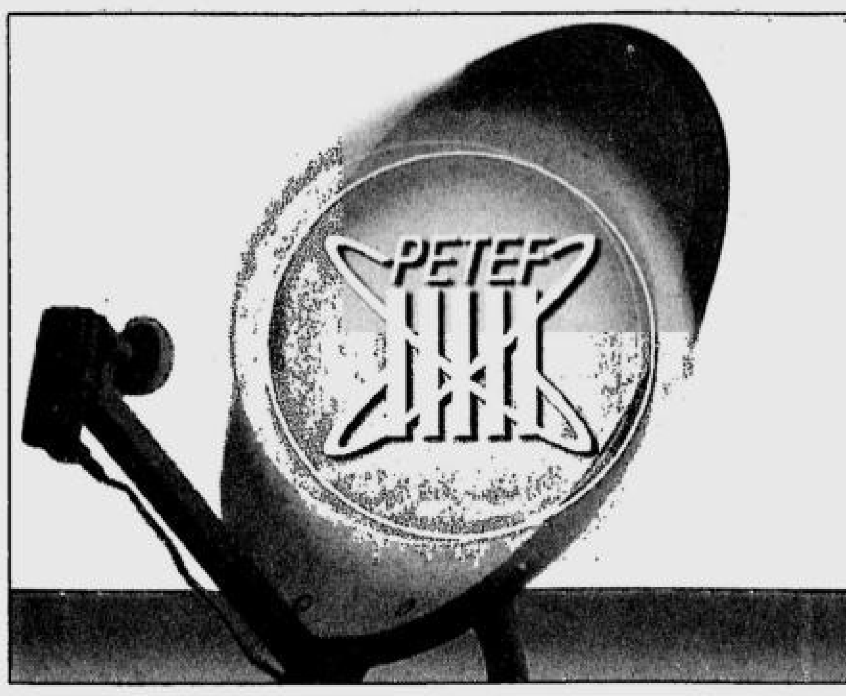
Each Whistlestop branch also has its share of rich and famous clients, not to mention shady characters. Movie stars, TV personalities and media persons, for instance, frequent the Morato branch because of its proximity to two of the country's leading TV networks. Peredo could write an entire book on the peculiar characters and situations they come across every day, especially during the wee hours.

"But I'm not telling," she swears. "We value our customers' privacy, and they appreciate us for that."

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



THAI sizzling seafood combination



PETEF 2002:
Catalyst for Information and Communications Technology Growth & Development

MESSAGES

My warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine Electronics and Telecommunications Federation on its Induction of Officers.

I commend your organization for being an outstanding leader of the telecommunications as well as information technology, electronics and broadcast industries. Your presence over the years has had a definite positive impact on these sectors.

Our administration welcomes the opportunity to work closely with PETEF and its new officers in our effort to improve our economy and the lives of our people. We recognize the importance of the various industries that represent membership in the PETEF to our country's bid to attain sustainable development in today's age of globalization. We share your commitment to develop our strengths in these areas. We remain confident that with our invaluable partnership, we will be able to steer these sectors and the entire country forward towards greater and more lasting growth.

May the induction of the new officers usher better times ahead for the PETEF.

Congratulations to all the new officers. Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GMArroyo
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
President
Republic of the Philippines

I congratulate the newly-installed officers and directors of the Philippine Electronics and Telecommunications Federation (PETEF)!

The electronics and communications sectors in the Philippines have definitely gone a long way since their modest beginnings. In these interesting times, they have evolved to include broadcast and cable industries. Professionals in these varied and interesting spheres are faced with the challenge of further developing these industries to make them at par, if not comparable with the rest of the world. It is fortunate that our human resource is teeming with people of world-class skills and intelligence none could match. Let us bank on our people and move the country forward as we collectively work towards the attainment of national growth.

Mabuhay!

Ramon B. Magsaysay, Jr.
Senator
Philippine Sanate

First off, I want to congratulate the newly-elected officers of the Philippine Electronics and Telecommunications Federation. Your assistance in our effort to bridge the digital divide can not be underestimated nor neglected.

We all have a Herculean task ahead of us in trying to get the people in all our seven thousand plus islands connected to one another and to the rest of the world. Though it is true that most of the world is already getting connected and actual physical distances seem to be shorter, it is still true that a good number of people do not have access to a telephone much less the Internet. This is a situation that we all have to help rectify.

It thus falls to us to make sure that our people get the connectivity and access they need and rightfully deserve. Without the right information, our people stay in the dark with nary a chance to find a way to light their way. With the right information, however, they have the means to better their lives and those of their loved ones.

Let us join hands once more to give all of us a chance to advance as a nation in this age of information.

Congratulations to all of you and Mabuhay!

Pantaleon D. Alvarez
Secretary, Department
of Transportation
and Communications

Congratulations!

We in the National Telecommunications Commission are eagerly looking forward to continuing our very good working relationship with the Philippine Electronics and Telecommunications Federation.

We believe that it is in the interest of the entire country to foster greater cooperation between the private and public sectors and PETEF has proven to be a very cooperative and effective partner in nation-building.

The importance of this partnership with the private sector can never be understated. The NTC is easily the people's voice to the prime movers of the telecommunications, information technology, electronics and broadcast industries.

There is so much to do to get our people the information they need in a way that is accessible to them. Alone, the public sector can only do so much. Together with the people in PETEF the future seems so much more promising as it facilitates the right type of investments and projects.

Congratulations again to the people in PETEF.

Eliseo M. Rio, Jr.
Commissioner, National
Telecommunications
Commission

I welcome all of you to PETEF!

We are a new set of officers in this very well-established group and our minds are very clear about what we have to do: help the economy through the industries we operate in and by connecting our people to one another and to the world.

It is true that the Philippines suffers from many ills but an ill that cannot be tolerated is the inability to get information relevant to bettering our lives and those of our loved ones. Thus is now falls to both the public and private sector to rectify this at the soonest possible time. PETEF has been a catalyst for change since its birth in the late sixties and now it has an even greater challenge of not only making technology available to our people but getting that technology to work together for all our people.

Convergence is merely a word unless we get it to work for us. We cannot allow ourselves to just dream of bridging the digital divide without making sure that the necessary elements are all present. This means a close working relationship among the cable television, broadcast, telecommunications and information technology industries. This means a close working relationship between public and private sector. This means a good amount of work to be done and it falls to me and my comrades in PETEF to buckle down and start working.

With the task ahead of us very clear, we welcome the challenge to work and work now.

Thank you very much.

David T. Fernando
President, PETEF

The Philippines stands poised this century to leverage its competitive strengths to join the circle of winners in the global and New Economy.

It is an economy where intellectual capital carries more importance and wields more effectiveness than the traditional factors of production and where services employ more human resources than traditional manufacturing.

The New Economy is also global. Each nation, if it intends its citizens to share in the fruits of progress this century, must now concentrate on its core competencies and market these abilities to the entire world. There are no longer national economies that can thrive on a stand- alone basis nor employ legislation to shield themselves from the onslaught of global competition. Those that insist on doing so will find themselves left behind in the economic backwaters with their people mired in poverty.

The New Economy has as its foundation the capabilities to make wealth through Information and Communications Technology. Through advances in ICT, new industries have been born. Also, older industries have found new vigor to add more economic value and extend their markets globally.

The country's leaders have recognized this and the country's official economic policy blueprint, the National Economic Development Authority's latest Medium Term Development Plan has an entire chapter devoted solely to ICT and its role in the country's economy. Chapter 4 of this plan is aptly titled, " Building on the Country's Strenghts in Information and Communication Technology ".

The plan echoes President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's pronouncements and actions especially those enunciated in her State -of-the -Nation address given July 23, 2001 where she declared, "As a first step, let us declare that technology is the foundation of future economic development. As China did in 1998, ICT will jumpstart our old stalling economy and make it leapfrog into new economy."

True to form, the President of the Philippines has assumed chairmanship of the Information Technology and Electronic Commerce Council, the joint public and private sector body that advises macro-level crafting of ICT policy. The Presidential Management Staff now also acts as the ITECC secretariat.

Under the country's current Medium Term Development Plan, the Philippines is envisioned to become a knowledge center, achieve its selected market niche in software development and data management and become the e-service hub in Asia.

The Plan builds on the Philippines' competitive strengths with regard to ICT. These inlcude the ability to speak English, education, an easily trainable workforce with an established track record of successful ICT work, a basic policy environment that is right for business, government commitment at the highest levels, with strong private sector support in the pursuit of a common ICT agenda and rising entrepreneurial abilities suitable for a globalizing economy.

In line with the PETEF vision to promote the common good, the Federation commits itself collectively and individually to help achieve this ICT economic agenda. This by way of working hand-in-hand with government and help to further refine this policy.

This also by way of contributing to the organizational, business, managerial, and professional skills of its members, composed of associations and organizations, corporations, and individuals in various ICT endeavors shall make ICT the catalyst for Philippine economic growth and development. Included in the PETEF roster of members are most of the leaders in the country's telecommunications, information technology, electronics, Internet, and allied industries sectors.

PETEF's activities in helping achieve the ICT agenda will be towards helping build the physical infrastructure to ensure wider, faster and reliable access at low cost to information and other ICT resources, especially in the underdeveloped rural areas; helping enhance the policy and legal environment to promote ICT development and universal access to information and other ICT resources; helping develop the country's human potential to enable Filipinos to compete in the digital age; and helping promote the use of ICT to streamline business processes and modernize government operations for greater productivity.

Enhancing these activities is the formation of PETEF's Business Opportunities Committee. Started two years ago, it seeks out traditional and innovative measures to promote ICT products and services and establishes business cooperation and alliances amongst members with suitable business partners who have complementary and supplementary profiles. Through its extensive networking affiliation and linkages, PETEF draws on its capacity to reach different communities across local, regional, international levels.

This May, PETEF will stage the return of CommAsia. All set to replicate its success last year which was inaugurated by no less than President Arroyo herself, CommAsia 2002 is the ICT major event of the year showcasing for the first time the Good Partners Session. Designed primarily to augment and match the demand and supply needs of ICT players, the session will also provide a convenient venue for ICT players to present their products and services. Particularly interesting for those who have new and innovative products and services but are not prepared with substantial marketing budget, this session will be the ideal vehicle for them to reach all levels of the marketplace with the participation of local, regional and international ICT players.

As an umbrella organization, PETEF saw its birth in 1968 during the decades when the world saw momentous technological and economic changes that would transport it from the industrial to the Information Age. In these 34 years, the Federation can look back with pride to its contributions to the growth of the Philippine economy.

Today, more than three decades later, as new challenges borne out of a new economic paradigm face the country, PETEF pledges that its members shall collectively and individually respond to these challenges to ensure that social and economic welfare of the Filipino people is given the utmost importance this century. This is PETEF's commitment and fervent social responsibility. (Albert S. Velasco)

Seated, L-R: Albert S. Velasco, Director; Olegario S. Serafica. Auditor; Ma. Corazon M. Akol, Director; David T. Fernando, PETEF President; Cynthia R. Mamon, Director and; Romeo T. Recto, VP for Finance and Treasurer.
Standing, L-R: Rolando C. Alarcon, VP for Membership; Rolando Marcos Padilla, VP for Communication; Romulo R. Agatep, VP for Education; Oscar S. Villacorta, Executive Director; Jimmy Tinio, Director and; Atty. Melchor S. Latina, Secretary General.
Not in Photo: Maureen V. Santiago, VP for Events; Atty. Rogelio V. Quevedo, VP for GIRC; Albert Tuason, Director; Miguel Uy, Director; Francisco Jesus Naranjilla, Director.

PETEF Induction of 2002 Officers and Directors & Annual General Membership Meeting

January 24, 2002, Shangri-la Hotel, Makati City

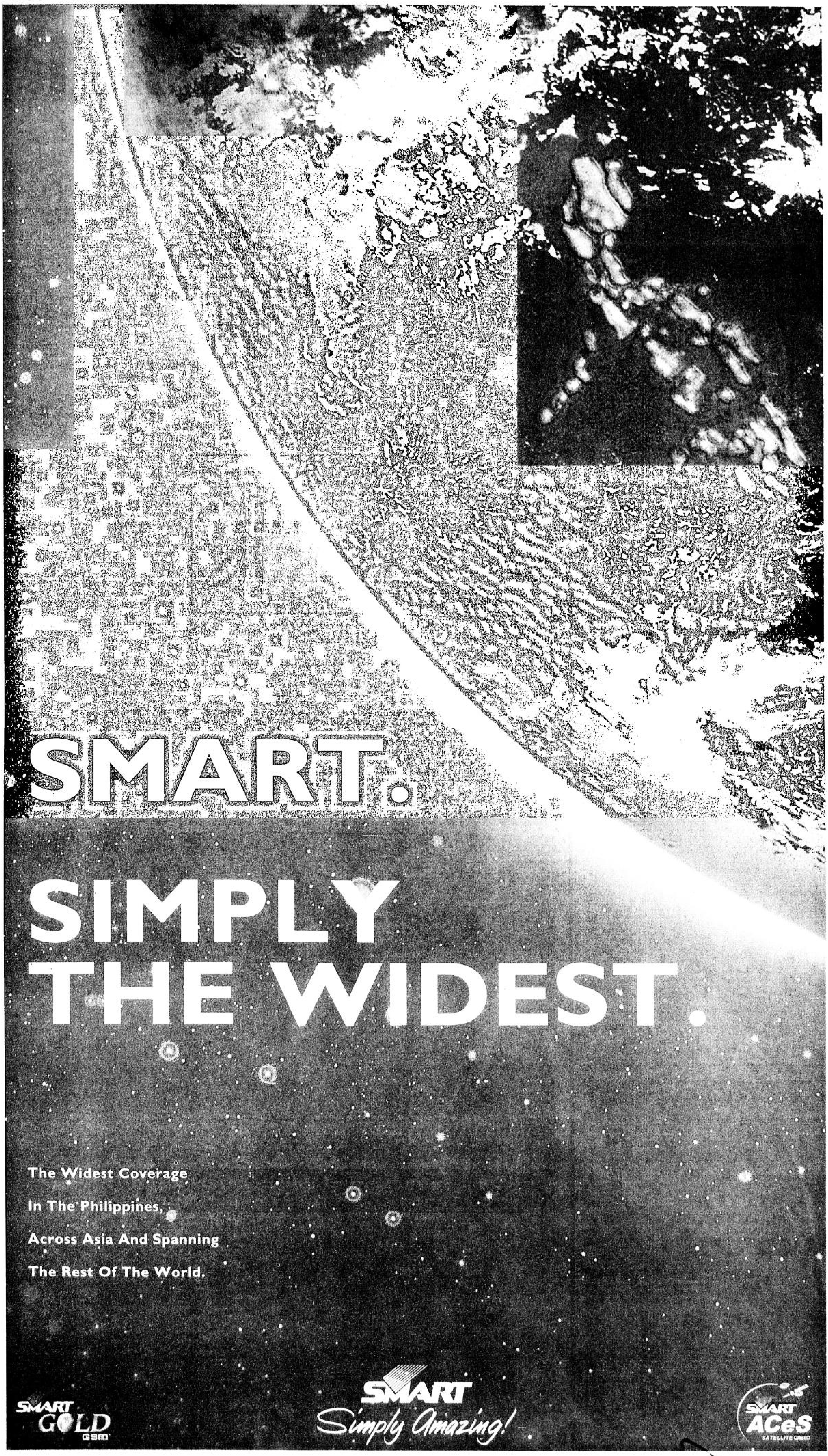
PETEF: Catalyst for ICT Growth & Development

PROGRAMME

Call to Order	**David T. Fernando** *President, PETEF*
Invocation	**Albert L. Tuason** *Director & Co-Chair, GIRC*
National Anthem	**Roland Marcos Padilla** *Director & VP, Events*
Induction of Dignitaries & Guests	**Francisco Jesus Naranjilla** *Director & Chair, Sports*
Welcome Remarks	**Maureen V. Santiago** *Director & VP, Events*
Valedictory Address	**Rodolfo A. Salalima** *Immediate Past President*
Official Turn-over of Gavel	**David T. Fernando** *Incoming President* **Rodolfo A. Salalima** *Outgoing President*

Inaugural Address	**David T. Fernando** *President*
Induction of Guest of Honor & Guest	**Romeo T. Recto** *Director & VP, Finance & Treasurer*
Keynote Speech	
Induction of 2002 Officers and Directors and its Member Associations	**- PETEF Board** **- PETEF Foundation** **- ETSIP** **- ITESAP**
Induction of New Members	**Rolando C. Alarcon** *Director & VP, Membership*
Closing Remarks	**Ma. Corazon M. Akol** *Director & Past President*
Adjournment	**David T. Fernando** *President, PETEF*

Albert S. Velasco
Master of Ceremony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Across Asia And Spanning
The Rest Of The World.
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